

4TH ANNUAL DLSPH STUDENT LED CONFERENCE

THE  
**NEW**  
NORMAL

*Takeaways on Health Misinformation During a Pandemic*  
**NOVEMBER 11TH-13TH, 2021**

*Sponsorship*  
**Package**

**Dalla Lana**  
School of Public Health



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# LETTER FROM THE DEAN

**Dalla Lana**  
School of Public Health

Adalsteinn Brown Professor and Dean  
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E dean.dlsph@utoronto.ca

September 27, 2021

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

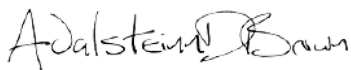
I am writing on behalf of the students at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health (DLSPH). Each year, the students organize and host a conference to examine a timely public health issue of great importance for research, practice, and policy. We are pleased to be the main sponsor for the 14th Annual Student-Led Conference, entitled "The New Normal: Takeaways on Health Misinformation During a Pandemic". This virtual conference will explore how health misinformation has had an impact on the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ramifications of health misinformation have been highlighted as an urgent knowledge gap that must be addressed by healthcare professionals, policymakers, elected officials and other stakeholders. Throughout the conference, speakers will articulate how and why public health must move to address health misinformation in a time when social media propagates the rapid spread of information and why we must move toward innovative, lasting change that will foster health equity for all. By bringing together voices from academia, social services, healthcare, policy arenas, and individuals with lived experience, the conference will enable a holistic examination of health misinformation and promises to address the subsequent impact across multiple socio-ecological levels. This conference will aim to:

1. Promote awareness and dialogue around misinformation surrounding current and emerging health topics in public health emergencies;
2. Directly connect students to community members, researchers, service providers, and policy makers;
3. Engage peer experts and highlight lived experiences by creating a platform that encourages open-mindedness, knowledge sharing, and learning.

I believe this conference will generate innovative ideas and dialogue and I encourage you to contribute financially or in-kind to its success. Thank you in advance for any contribution you can provide. We look forward to seeing you virtually at this exciting event!

Sincerely,



Adalsteinn (Steini) Brown  
Professor and Dean



Health Sciences Building  
155 College Street, Office 638  
Toronto, ON M5T 3M7

[dlsph.utoronto.ca](http://dlsph.utoronto.ca)



# LETTER FROM THE STUDENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dear Potential Sponsor,

On behalf of the student executive committee, it is our great honour to present the 14th Annual Dalla Lana School of Public Health Student-Led Conference, entitled 'The New Normal: Takeaways on Health Misinformation During a Pandemic'. This multi-day virtual event will bring together academics, students, policymakers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders who are interested in exploring the impact of health misinformation in the midst of a pandemic. As public health students in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed firsthand how health misinformation can have detrimental ramifications in the real world, resulting in a need for improved policy and practice concerning misinformation.

The New Normal will focus on the negative impact of misinformation in health, specifically in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, and emphasize possible innovative strategies or community-based interventions that can mitigate the spread of misinformation. Our conference will acknowledge that the spread of misinformation is multifactorial, influenced by the intersectionality of various social, psychological and ecological forces. We also recognize the complexity of public health emergencies and the importance of using socio-ecological models to guide responses, ensuring that interventions are focused not solely on individual behaviour change, but on addressing issues at interpersonal, community, institutional and policy levels.

This conference will draw upon the knowledge of a variety of individuals whose work and experiences are relevant to the field of health misinformation. In recognition of the importance of community engagement and co-creation, we strive to ensure that the voices of community members and those with lived experiences are centred throughout our event. Our aim is to foster a collaborative environment that encourages critical conversations and inspires innovative thinking.

At the core of public health is a commitment to health equity and social justice. We aim to use a de-stigmatizing approach to understand and address the spread of misinformation, with the goal to educate conference attendees and mobilize them to address socio-ecological factors influencing the spread of health misinformation. By actively participating in workshops, presentations, and other conference activities, attendees will be challenged to identify personal biases and embrace new ways of thinking. It is our hope that participants will walk away with a greater understanding of the pathology of health misinformation within the public and how insights from this topic can be integrated into their own research and practice.

We greatly appreciate any financial or in-kind contribution you are able to provide. Your support will be instrumental to the success of our student-led initiative. Thank you for your support and consideration.

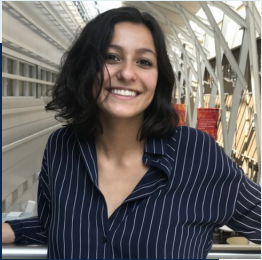
Sincerely,

*Newsha Mahinpey, Joonsoo Sean Lyeo, Braveenan Pradeep, Megan Lowe, Mindy Lu, Annelise Perron, Camila Benmessaoud, Sarah Kinley, Keltie Hamilton, Gagandeep Johal, Lily Nguyen, Martha Pienkowski*

Student Executive Committee Co-Leads, 14th Annual DLSPH Student-Led Conference



# MEET THE TEAM



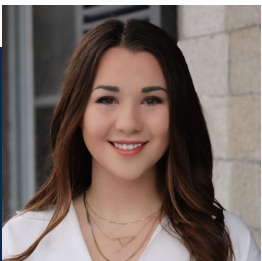
## **NEWSHA MAHINPEY, INTERNAL**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology with a Collaborative Specialization in Addiction studies. I am interested in community health, mental health, and health equity. As the Internal Lead of this year's conference, I am very excited to help manage our team in creating an amazing experience for all who attend the event!



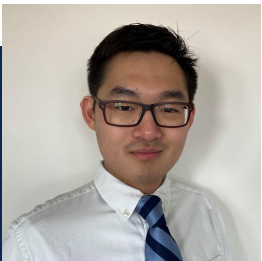
## **KELTIE HAMILTON, LOGISTICS**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology. My research interests include substance harms, addiction, harm reduction, and global health. I have a strong interest in improving harm reduction service access globally through research based evidence. I am so excited to be joining the team as the Logistics Lead and help create a memorable conference experience for everyone alongside the rest of my team.



## **ANNELISE PERRON, COMMUNICATIONS**

I am a first year Master of Public Health student specializing in Indigenous Health with a Collaborative Specialization in Global Health. I am passionate about how notions of community, relationships, and structural factors are intertwined with the health of a population, and the importance of cultural sensitivity and humility being put at the forefront of all public health interventions. I am looking forward to my role with the Student Led Conference this year as the Communications Co-Lead, and can't wait to promote the conference and its values to the DLSPH community and beyond!



## **JOONSOO SEAN LYEEO, COMMUNICATIONS**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology. My research interests are in environmental epidemiology, specifically looking at the effects of climate change on human health. I'm very proud of the work everyone on the team has put into making this conference happen. I hope that it ends up being an insightful and enjoyable experience for all those who attend!





## **GAGANDEEP (GAGAN) JOHAL, FINANCE**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Indigenous Health. My interests include health equity, cultural safety within healthcare, and public health policy. I'm looking forward to connecting with community sponsors and facilitating in the creation of an engaging conference as the Finance Co-Lead.



## **BRAVEENAN PRADEEP, FINANCE**

I am a Master of Public Health student in Epidemiology, which includes a Collaborative Specialization in Addiction Studies. My primary interests include exploring ethnicity, immigration and mental health/addictions - and their intersections - in the context of public health issues of concern. This includes learning about effective policy development to efficiently implement public health evidence. I look forward to supporting this year's online conference as the Finance Co-Lead!



## **SARAH KINLEY, CONTENT**

I am a Master of Health Informatics student whose interests include the effective application of healthcare technology and artificial intelligence to improve patient outcomes and chronic disease management. I am very excited to serve on the committee as a Content Co-Chair to help contribute to an informative and inspiring experience for those attending. I hope to leave attendees with a new perspective on chosen topics and a strengthened network with individuals similarly driven to contribute to improvements in healthcare.



## **CAMILA BENMESSAOUD, CONTENT**

I am a Master of Health Informatics student who is deeply passionate about building a more sustainable, evidence-based, equitable, and patient-centric digital health ecosystem that not only provides patients, caregivers, and clinicians a more pleasant care experience, but concurrently optimizes health outcomes. As a Content Co-Lead, and in understanding the implications of health misinformation, I'm excited to bring together highly skilled professionals in this year's Student Led Conference who will provide valuable insight on ways to navigate the new normal - where filtering through information overload is a daily experience.



## **TANJEEM TAHA, CONTENT**

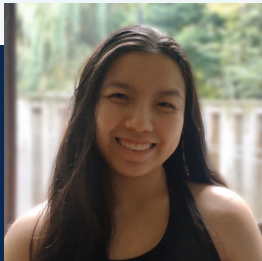
I am a Master of Health Informatics candidate at IHPME. My interests include data analytics and project management with a focus on projects related to chronic disease, health equity, patient accessibility, and virtual care. I am super excited to serve on this committee as a part of the Content team to support the development of this year's conference and it make it a wonderful experience for all attendees!





### **MEGAN LOWE, RESEARCH & PRACTICE**

I am a first year Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology. This year, I am looking forward to exploring my interests in non-communicable and communicable disease surveillance and prevention. Currently, my research involves analyzing methods of enhancing medication adherence among diverse populations. I am excited to work with my wonderful team members in planning this year's conference as a Research & Practice Co-Lead.



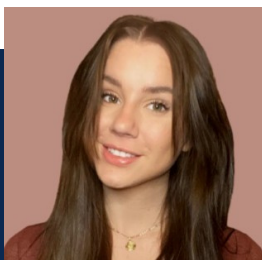
### **MINDY LU, RESEARCH & PRACTICE**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology. My interests include mental health, women's health as well as immigrant and refugee health. I am very excited to contribute to the conference as a Research and Practice Co-Lead and look forward to preparing an engaging and insightful conference for students and public health professionals.



### **LILY NGUYEN, EVALUATION**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Social and Behavioural Health Sciences (Health Promotion). I have a strong interest in promoting health equity across large populations, as well as harm reduction. As one of the Evaluation Co-Leads and member of the Content committee, I'm really looking forward to help make this year's conference memorable and engaging for everyone!



### **MARTHA PIENKOWSKI, EVALUATION**

I am a Master of Public Health student specializing in Epidemiology, with a Collaborative Specialization in Addiction Studies. I have a strong interest in mental health and addiction studies, especially in at-risk youth, and my current research focuses on vaping and nicotine dependence in Canadian youth. I am very excited to be on this team as the Evaluation Co-Lead, and to also assist the Finance Co-Leads with their work, to create a memorable and stimulating conference.



# Conference Values

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## **01.** *Evidence-Based Practice & Critical Analysis*

This conference prioritizes the adoption of evidence-based practice to bring forth accurate and quality information. We seek to shed light on the importance of filtering through articles of information by appropriately sourcing the findings and recognizing authorial implicit biases. Although conducting research through best-practices is imperative to the quality of information, it is often not enough to discern from right or wrong. Through this conference, we hope to empower individuals to think more critically of the information being consumed to come to a more evidence-informed and critically analyzed decision.

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## **02.** *Equitable, Diverse, & Inclusive Community Engagement*

This conference acknowledges the importance of community engagement that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive. We stand by embracing individual differences and allowing them to empower one another whilst offering everyone a space for their voice. By involving the diverse members of the community in which change wishes to be affected, the change becomes more suitable, sustainable, and effective. This conference aims to highlight the importance of the collaboration amongst communities and change effectors such as policy makers, healthcare workers, etc. as an avenue to combat the spread of misinformation and build trust.

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## **03.** *Integrity, Transparency, & Ethical Conduct*

This conference recognizes that misinformation in the public health domain is often related to a lack of integrity, transparency, and ethical conduct that surrounds the dissemination of information. By enhancing these principles and limiting the concealment by which information has been retrieved, the general public can more easily trust the knowledge sources and filter through the information overload. We hope to emphasize the criticality of openness and honesty amongst policy makers and public health workers towards the general public, especially when information is highly abundant such as public health emergencies, in order to render higher credibility and trust.





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## **04.** *Social Justice & Advocacy*

This conference prioritizes the adoption of evidence-based practice to bring forth accurate and quality information. We seek to shed light on the importance of filtering through articles of information by appropriately sourcing the findings and recognizing authorial implicit biases. Although conducting research through best-practices is imperative to the quality of information, it is often not enough to discern from right or wrong. Through this conference, we hope to empower individuals to think more critically of the information being consumed to come to a more evidence-informed and critically analyzed decision.

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## **05.** *The Right to Know*

This conference promotes each individual's right to the provision of truthful information on an ad hoc basis. Hereinafter, all peoples are entitled to be informed of public health hazards, best-practices, and safety guidelines through credible and reliable sources. Though there exists an information overload in this age, we recognize that individuals are often not directly informed from credible sources in a transparent manner. We aim to encourage all individuals attending this conference to recognize their right to seek credible information when desired.

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## **06.** *Socio-Ecological Model*

This conference recognizes the multi-level influence that the individual, interpersonal, community, institutional, and policy levels have on the access to credible, reliable, trustworthy, and accurate information. The intersectionality of these levels will be acknowledged within this conference to identify ways in which each level impacts one's provision of accurate information and how to deal with each level accordingly.



# Areas of Focus

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## **01.** *Life Cycle of Misinformation (consumers vs contributors)*

This conference will explore the ways in which misinformation continues to feed itself forward through its contributors and consumers. Contributors of misinformation come from a variety of backgrounds including politics, the media, and research publications. Being able to understand the grassroots agendas within each of these institutions is key to developing an eye for misinformation. The conference strives to highlight ways in which consumers can better filter through information and break the misinformation life cycle by being more critical of the available information.

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## **02.** *Community Solidarity (privilege and access-building trust)*

This conference will explore ways in which allyship and community solidarity can help to bring forth trust amongst underrepresented communities who have long been pushed to the margins by systematic leaders. We will discuss strategies in which political and health leaders can improve the communication and dissemination of public health information in a more sensitive and co-participatory fashion. Moreover, the conference will provide its attendees with insight on acknowledging implicit privileges and leveraging this domain to become allies and help in rebuilding trust.

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## **03.** *The Politics of Misinformation (role of the government)*

We will examine the role of the government at helping to manage the misinformation crisis throughout the pandemic. By doing this we will discuss policies, regulations and political agendas which could influence the way in which the public understands the dissemination of public health information and misinformation. Consequently, we hope to better equip future public health workers with the skills of how to approach future information crises.

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## **04.** *Social Media and the Internet*

Having social media and the internet at our fingertips, we can share anything with anyone, anywhere. Through the conference, we will examine methods in which the internet and various social media platforms have played a crucial role in the circulation of COVID-19 misinformation. There will be discussion on how a global health emergency can lead to an "infodemic" and an overabundance of information for the public to navigate. This conference will give attendees a look into how many Canadian researchers, science communicators and health providers took the initiative and worked tirelessly to stop the spread of COVID-19 misinformation.



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## 05. *Data Management and Validation*

We will explore how data is collected, analyzed, and managed in the context of a global pandemic. Despite the endless possibilities of using robust health data to drive improvements to care, COVID-19 has proven that there is still a great deal of room for improvement. Issues surrounding current data management and validation strategies will be discussed, with real world examples provided on how healthcare professionals attempted to improve data management strategies in light of the pandemic. Emphasis on data quality and data sharing will be explored to understand some of the crucial pain points in data management during a public health crisis. Examples include:

- Shortcomings in comprehensive data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic (ex. Initial lack of race-based data or data surrounding vulnerable populations such as those in LTC settings)
- Fact-checking different data sources on COVID-19 health information, such as COVID-19 case reports, vaccine efficacy, etc.
- Data-driven solutions that supported public health initiatives during COVID-19

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## 06. *Health Communication*

We will explore the concept of health communication during the COVID-19 pandemic, from a local and national perspective. Through the conference, we seek to understand effective communication strategies that helped bolster mitigation strategies for COVID-19, improve public trust, and improved adherence to public health guidelines. In addition, we will investigate ineffective strategies and recommendations that different stakeholders in our healthcare system must take in order to ensure improved communication for future public health crises. Examples include:

- The Ontario government and public health officials' role in disseminating health information to the public, including updates of COVID-19 cases, vaccines, and more.
- Health communication challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The health literacy of Ontarians and various factors to be considered when developing an effective communication strategy



# Conference History

2008



Poverty and Health: Partnerships in Action Conference

2009



The Research with Pride Conference

2010



The Art of Public Health Conference

2011



The Public Health 2.0 Conference

2012



The Health, Austerity, and Affluence Conference

2013



Healthy Toronto: Our Health Lives Here

2014



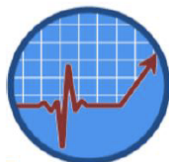
From Global Mess to Local Stress: Bringing the Health Impact of Environmental Changes to the Forefront of Public Health

2015



Racial Justice Matters: Advocating for Racial Health Equity

2016



Secure Income Secure Health: Working Towards Equitable Solutions

2017



The Next 150: Resisting Colonialism and (Re)claiming Health on Turtle Island

2018



Confront the Crisis: Promoting Dialogue and Action Surrounding Substance Use and Harm Reduction

2019



**PUSHING THE PARADIGM**  
Broadening our Understanding of Mental Health

Pushing the Paradigm: Broadening Our Understanding of Mental Health

2020



Moving Beyond Repair: Upstream Approaches to Public Health Emergencies

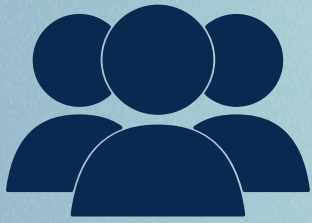
2021



The New Normal: Takeaways on Health Misinformation During a Pandemic



# PREVIOUS HIGHLIGHTS



**300+**  
*attendees*



**14**  
*speakers*



**2**  
*keynotes*



**13**  
*poster presentations*



**2**  
*oral presentations*



**3**  
*days*

**7**

*community,  
academic, &  
student group  
sponsors*



# Sponsorship Opportunities

## WHY SUPPORT THE DLSPH STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE?

1. You will be an agent of change by supporting the next generation of public health professionals and systems leaders in shaping meaningful impact in addressing the novel challenges of public health misinformation.
2. You will be a catalyst for knowledge exchange among 200+ conference attendees: students and professionals from diverse disciplines such as public health, medicine, law, sociology, nursing, and many others.
3. You will directly facilitate the education of professional, graduate, and undergraduate students at the University of Toronto among attendees from students across Canadian universities, and in doing so, help to shape the future of public health by creating a platform for student engagement and action.
4. You will pave the path of collaboration between the academic, non-profit, governmental, think tanks, and private sector in tackling this societal issue with an intersectoral lens.

## BENEFITS

**GOLD**  
(\$800+)

**SILVER**  
(\$300-\$799)

**BRONZE**  
(UP TO \$299)

**IN-KIND**

Acknowledgement in opening & closing remarks



Organizational logo appears on ALL conference promotional materials



Opportunity to distribute virtual swag to conference attendees



Promotion on social media channels

2 posts

2 posts

1 post

Receive a copy of the Key Findings Report following the conference



Organizational logo included on website and conference program



# PREVIOUS SPONSORS



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Access Alliance  
**Language Services**  
*solutions without borders*

**Hope + Me**  
Support. Recovery. Community.

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

**MAP** Centre for  
Urban Health  
Solutions



Alliance for  
Healthier Communities

Alliance pour des  
communautés en santé

**alPHa**

Association of Local  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Agencies



**ICHA** | Inner City  
Health Associates

**DR. LISA FORMAN**



# CONTACT US



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We would like to thank you for taking the time to consider supporting the 14th Annual Dalla Lana School of Public Health Student-Led Conference at the University of Toronto. We welcome monetary and in-kind contributions of any amount, and we are available to create a customized sponsorship package for you or your organization.

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Thank you for your time and consideration.  
We look forward to partnering with you!

*Please feel free to email us at [slc.dlsph@utoronto.ca](mailto:slc.dlsph@utoronto.ca) for further details.*



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<https://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/students/current-students/studentledconference/>