Highlights from the PRISM Health Symposium 2020

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Highlights
On December 3-4, 2020, we held the 5th annual PRISM Health Symposium and went entirely virtual for the first time with nearly 160 attendees representing academic researchers, industry partners, and public sectors.

Dr. Urmimala Sarkar, Professor at UCSF and symposium chair, opened the event with a land acknowledgement to recognize that UCSF sits on the land of the Ramaytush Ohlone people.

Attendees gathered online over the span of our two-day event to learn from our diverse lineup of speakers engaged in social media and health research.

Updates in Research Methodology: Data Sources & Considerations
Dr. Chris Bail, Professor at Duke University and Director of the Polarization Lab described how he uses bots to understand political polarization and echo chambers. He shared the results from his field experiment and found that "taking people outside their echo chambers did not make them more moderate, it made them more extreme."
Dr. Rumi Chunara, Assistant Professor at New York University discussed her work looking at geospatial networks related to discrimination on Twitter. She leverages social media to better understand discrimination by space and time because "social media data might have good geolocation information, and it’s a place where people would share things like discrimination or discriminatory comments where they might not do that on a survey."

Dr. Tim Mackey, Associate Professor at the University of California, San Diego talked about how we can augment data from traditional sources through social media infoveillance. He also shared his lab’s methodology for big data public health intelligence – data collection from multiple data sources → classification via machine learning and NLP → in-depth analysis → data visualization.

Ethics Panel

We concluded day one with a panel of online misinformation experts sharing ethical considerations and challenges within social media and health research. Dr. Sherry Pagoto, spoke about her work in creating online patient communities to deliver behavior interventions and highlighted the importance of communicating to participants that social media platforms have access to and own the data, including participant-generated content. Dr. David
Broniatowski describes how our ability to answer these ethical questions is hindered by our data access, which can lead to a “rich get richer phenomenon,” where those who have the resources will be able to archive data. An Xiao Mina, COO of Meedan, shares that misinformation is not the only challenge she’s facing at her global technology non-profit, but also “mid-information, something that was true at one point but is no longer accurate.”

Updates in Research Methodology: Interventions

Day two of PRISM began with a panel discussion on social media interventions.

Dr. Kar-Hai Chu, Associate Professor at the University of Pittsburgh, shared his work applying technology and social network analysis to reduce nicotine use among youth. He also highlighted the unique challenges with intervention work, but assures the audience that “given the technology we know and the audience segmentation that we can do on social media, it allows us to be precise, how we target the population for interventions.”

Dr. Megan Moreno, Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and lead investigator of the Social Media and Adolescent Health Research Team (SMAHRT) described the multi-step intervention development needed to utilize social media for adolescent interventions. The first step to consider is the rules of engagement. Dr. Moreno shared that “adolescents do not want us posting on their page,” and has informed the way she structures her interventions.

Groundwork to inform interventions
Dr. Emily Vraga, Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota, talked about how to correct health misinformation on social media. She walked us through a figure from *The Debunking Handbook* to explain how to intervene when misinformation is rampant versus expected. For example, when misinformation already exists in social media, we need to use observational correction to counter misinformation.

![Strategic Debunking Decisions](image)

Industry Panel

We culminated our two-day event learning from our industry panelists. They shared how their experience working in academia taught them transferable skills that allowed them to succeed in their current roles. Dr. Glen Coppersmith of Qntfy, spoke about the critical skill he learned was “the clarity of thought and learning how to tell a story.” Dr. Sanjay Kairam of Twitch, emphasized “thinking clearly about measurement” and “trying to maintain a rich mental model” are aspects that are done well in academia. Dr. Laura Kiken of Facebook, described how her experiences in project management and people management are really valuable skills in industry. Dr. Sarah LaRocca of Facebook, talked about being able to start from an abstract question and carrying that into a design, as well as synthesizing work that’s already been done.

Rapid-Fire and Poster Session

In addition to our panel discussion, we focused on research from trainees and junior faculty, presenting on either research in progress or completed research. In total, we learned from 10 rapid-fire presentations and 24 poster presentations. The full list of presenters can be found [here](#).

**PRISM 2020 Awards**

Best Rapid-Fire Presentation by a non-trainee: Yonaira Rivera
Best Rapid-Fire Presentation by a trainee: Marily Oppezzo
Best Poster Presentation by a non-trainee: Nadia Diamond-Smith
Best Poster Presentation by a trainee: Allison Altman
Most Engaging Tweet: Julia Ryan
Special thanks to: our co-host Hopelab, sponsors (UCSF Clinical & Translational Science Institute, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, UCSF Center for Vulnerable Populations, UCSF Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Hopelab), steering committee (Dr. Urmimala Sarkar, Dr. Jon Patrick-Allem, Dr. Sylvia Chou, Dr. Valentin Danchev, Dr. Michael Deiner, Dr. Eleni Linos, Dr. Courtney Lyles, Dr. Tim Mackey, Dr. Meredith Meacham, Dr. Thu Nguyen, Dr. Danielle Ramo, Dr. Molly Waring), event staff (Marika Dy, Grace Greene, Sarah Lisker, Kristan Olazo, Natalie Rivadeneira, Maribel Sierra), and to our tech support Brian Coe.

Announcements
We are excited to announce that steering committee member Dr. Jon-Patrick Allem will serve as co-chair next year, alongside Dr. Sarkar.

Dr. Allem is an Assistant Professor of Research at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Dr. Allem's work focuses on developing cutting-edge methodologies to improve population health surveillance and policy. His multidisciplinary expertise in behavioral science, preventive medicine, and data science has led to data-driven public health insights featured in prominent media and scholarly outlets.

Please save December 3, 2021, to attend PRISM 2021 in San Francisco, location TBD.

PRISM Health Symposium
Promoting Research in Social Media and Health

DECEMBER 3, 2021
SAVE THE DATE
6TH ANNUAL PRISM HEALTH SYMPOSIUM
San Francisco, CA

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