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Salzburg Statement on Realizing the Promise of Data in Health Care

A CALL TO ACTION

In March 2015, a group of 57 international health care policy and data experts, patients, practitioners, academics, and representatives of providers and industry, from 21 countries, participated in the Salzburg Global Seminar session ***The Promise of Data: Will This Bring a Revolution in Health Care?*** (March 22 to 27, 2015).

We are in the midst of dramatic changes and innovations in the ways we gather, mine, analyze and deploy data, which has the potential to improve value in health and health care by better supporting decision-making and engagement; identifying the needs and wants of individuals and populations; reducing waste and harm; and reducing health inequities.

But these urgently needed gains will not be achieved unless the public, policymakers, the private sector, health care providers, and other stakeholders work together to create the right enabling environment.

The participants of the 2015 session are continuing to work on this and call on relevant decision-takers and thought leaders around the world to join them.

Salzburg Global Seminar is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1947, with the mission to challenge present and future leaders to solve issues of global concern: www.SalzburgGlobal.org

Why act and why now?

- There is rapid innovation in collecting, analyzing and using data, which holds both opportunities and threats to the public good.
- A learning system, one that uses information to improve health for all, is fundamental to creating health in the 21st century. Health is essential to the realization of human rights. Every piece of the social fabric is damaged by poor health: individual wellbeing, family structures, community and broader social cohesion, a healthy workforce for economic dynamism, and political stability.
- It is essential to monitor and assess any potential threats to the public good from use of data and to provide protection for individuals and systems from any potential misuse of data.
- Integrating health care data more systematically with data from other domains which have an impact on health and vice versa will offer a more holistic understanding of health, and support better strategies for creating and improving health. Data covering social, economic and environmental determinants, and including, but not limited to, air and water quality, educational opportunity, socio-economic status, and food security, is essential to understanding and improving individual and population health.
- A participatory approach is crucial, engaging all stakeholders, including the stakeholders that matter the most: the individuals, their families, and communities that live with the consequences of knowledge and decisions in health and health care.

We call on policymakers, data holders, including research bodies, industry and individuals to act now.

A full list of recommendations is included overleaf.

The views expressed in this statement reflect consensus among participants and should not be taken to represent those of all participants or of any organization with which they are affiliated.

Participants at the session:

Megan Anderson Brooks, Kristen Anton, Andrew Bate, Per Båtelson, Milica Begovic Radojevic, Ruth Bell, Agnes Binagwaho, Gaetano Brianese, Felix Chang, Desiree Daniega, Amarendra Das, Jens Deerberg-Wittram, Christopher Dobyns, Rebecca Emeny, Sofia Ernestam, Amel Farrag Hammad, Elliott Fisher, Ho Ching Fong, Christoph Hamelmann, Anna Hanchar, Shahid Hanif, Yael Harris Goldwater, Harri Honko, Ivan Ivanovic, Birgir Jakobsson, Sander Klous, Jean-Pierre Kocher, Navjoyt Ladher, Mark Leenay, Geraint Lewis, Keith Lindor, Benjamine Liu, Michael Mackley, Deven McGraw, Bertalan Mesko, Marco Monti, Andrew Muhire, Albert Mulley, Katherine Niehaus, Jörgen Nordenström, Merritt Patridge, Mihajlo Rabrenovic, William Riley, Veronique Roger, George Runger, Leo Ryan, Lucy Savitz, Nilay Shah, Sara Riggare, Aleksandra Stojanovic, Johan Thor, Darren Toh, Hamish Tomlinson, Jingjing Wang, Thomas Woodcock, Yan Yu

This statement is accompanied by a full report from the session *The Promise of Data: Will this Bring a Revolution in Health Care?*, covering all discussions and key recommendations, available online: www.SalzburgGlobal.org/go/548/report

More information on the multi-year series *Health and Health Care Innovation* can be found online: health.SalzburgGlobal.org

We call on policymakers to:

- **Enact policies** which enable data sharing for public good, creating incentives to do so, removing obstructions, and developing infrastructure necessary to support data sharing, aggregation, analysis, and presentation;
- **Protect individuals and groups** from possible harms such as misuse; establish accountability for harmful collection, uses and disclosures; and ensure redress for individuals and groups subjected to harms;
- **Build trust** by:
 - **including the broader public**, both at the individual and community-level, in decisions about the priority uses of data, the development of regulatory structures, and the design and implementation of health data strategies at local, national, and international levels;
 - **ensuring transparency** in data sharing policies, including privacy and security protections;
 - **monitoring and addressing unintended consequences** of data sharing in the development of new policies and practices;
- **Create an environment conducive to sharing data**, designing incentives to reward data sharing, and crediting those who supply and use data for the public good;
- **Provide sufficient funding** to ensure benefits of aggregation, analysis and presentation are equitably distributed across populations;
- **Track systematically** the rapidly evolving technologies, revisiting policies on a regular basis and continuously learning from experience.

We call on data holders, including research bodies, industry and individuals to:

- **Share their data:** those who collect data should contribute it as a social duty to create greater value in health, and in health and social care;
- **Provide data in ways that are accessible, meaningful, and empowering.** Individuals in particular need enhanced access to data to take care of themselves, to make choices and manage their health and health care, and the health and health care of their families – and to tilt the power distribution in current health care systems more in their favor.