

## Professional Profile

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I am a scholar–practitioner working at the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI), ethics, and community-based health systems. My current work examines how AI-enabled Community Health Worker (CHW) programmes reshape accountability, power, and human judgement in high-stakes public services, with particular attention to the ethical limits of automation in frontline care delivery. I currently lead an interdisciplinary research collaborative on the use and governance of AI in community health systems across over 40 countries in my roles as Senior Director of Research and Artificial Intelligence at the Community Health Impact Coalition. This work builds on my DPhil at The University of Oxford, where I developed and evaluated an open-access machine learning system for supervising community health workers, using participatory methods to examine how digital supervision redistributes responsibility, judgement, and oversight in low-resource settings.

Alongside my academic and policy work in global health, I served as a physician in the NHS between 2015-2026. In 2014 I founded a public health digital education platform focused on translating complex health concepts for wider public audiences. This has been accessed over 200 million times, with a global userbase across over 180 countries. The platform has been recognised with awards from Google Health and has led campaigns for the UK government.

## Education

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- DPhil:** **Doctorate in Digital Education, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK (2020).**  
*Funded by Clarendon Scholarship and an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Fellowship*  
**Thesis topic:** The role of mobile technologies and machine learning to support ethical supervision in CHW programmes, viewed through a community-based participatory research lens.
- MBA:** **Executive Master of Business Administration, Global Business School for Health, University College, London, UK (Distinction, 2025).** *Awarded Deans Scholarship for Excellence*  
**Thesis Year One:** The role of Google Trend Analytics to develop targeted obesity response strategies amongst public health authorities in US and UK (*Distinction*).  
**Thesis Year Two:** Understanding the role of Artificial Intelligence amongst clinicians in developing digital health education videos on YouTube – A mixed methods study (*Distinction*).
- MBBS:** **Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Newcastle University, Newcastle, UK (Merit, 2015)**
- Kennedy Scholar:** **Kennedy Scholar & Visiting Fellow, Harvard University, Massachusetts, US (2013-2014)**  
Visiting Fellow at Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
- MRes:** **Masters in Research, Ageing and Health, Newcastle University, Newcastle, UK (Distinction, 2012)**

## Career Experience

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### COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPACT COALITION, UK

**2023 – Present**

#### Director of Research and Artificial Intelligence

- Established a global AI collaborative which aims to develop ethical governance frameworks for AI use in community health systems, including safeguards against automation bias, algorithmic overreach, and inequitable decision-making.
- Formed and maintained strategic relationships with academic, policy and civil society partners across 40+ countries, including WHO, Africa CDC, The Gates Foundation and GAVI.
- Lead author on normative and empirical frameworks, published in *The Lancet Global Health*, advancing standards for the ethical inclusion of CHWs in research, including consent, recognition, and data governance.

- Member of the executive leadership team awarded the Roux Prize from IHME, recognising “outstanding research and advocacy in establishing evidence-based health systems benefiting millions globally” and the 2025 Skoll Prize for Social Innovation, recognising “social innovators who advance bold and equitable solutions to the world’s most pressing problems”.
- Designed, led and published major global podcast on the role of data in CHW programs, forming strategic partnerships with Gates Foundation, The Fleming Initiative, and The World Bank Group. The podcast was downloaded over 2000 times within the first six months of launch demonstrating commitment to impact beyond the academy.

#### **MOUNT SINAI SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, NEW YORK, USA**

**2023 – Present**

##### **Assistant Clinical Professor, Global Health and Health Systems Design**

- Principal investigator on 15 peer-reviewed studies - notably global economic evaluations of CHW programs and gender violence prevalence surveys published in leading journals including The Lancet, The Lancet Global Health and BMJ Global Health.
- Co-led interdisciplinary research on the ethical design and evaluation of digital health systems in CHW programmes.

#### **WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, UK**

**2023 – Present**

##### **Technical Advisory Group CHW Curricula Design**

- One of 25 international representatives selected to design the inaugural CHW curricula in partnership with WHO.
- Successfully lobbied the committee for the inclusion of 20 CHWs from four countries on the expert panel.

#### **CUMBRIA, NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE AND WEAR NHS FOUNDATION TRUST, UK**

**2023 – Present**

##### **Medical Doctor in Memory Assessment Services**

#### **O’DONOVAN MEDICAL EDUCATION LIMITED, UK**

**2021 – Present**

##### **Chief Executive Officer**

- Built a global online health communication platform from a standing start to more than 600,000 users and more than 200 million resource access’.
- Advises UK government and major academic bodies on ethical standards for clinician-led digital content, including trust, transparency, conflicts of interest, and algorithmic amplification.
- Forged alliances with YouTube Health, Department of Health and Social Care, and Harvard University Centre for Health Communication.
- Co-authored the key Academy of Royal Medical College 2023 best-practice guidelines on clinician’s responsible and ethical use of social media to produce digital health information.
- Delivered key-note presentations at Google UK, YouTube Health UK, Amicus UK, The Royal College of Physicians.
- Contributes to high-level governance discussions on platform responsibility and public epistemic harm.

#### **NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND DEANERY, UK**

**2021 – 2023**

##### **General Practice Training Program**

- Selected for the Health Equity Fellowship to work in underserved communities with significant health disparities.
- Drove evidence-based improvements, developed and strengthened community-based health initiatives across the North-East of England including the establishment of a ‘link-worker’ health initiative in a rural coastal GP practice, improving access to care for over 40 patients with significant socio-economic challenges.

#### **STANFORD CENTER FOR HEALTH EDUCATION, STANFORD UNIVERSITY, US**

**2019**

##### **Scholar in Residence, Digital Medic**

- Authored a white paper “Digital Medic at Stanford University – Program Strengthening Report,”; identified key areas for organisational growth and improvement.

#### **THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, Switzerland**

**2018 – 2020**

##### **Researcher, Division of Prevention of Hearing Loss and Deafness**

- Advised Head of Division and supported redesign of WHO Primary Ear Care Training Programme, developed relationships through several countries; advocated the delivery of ear and hearing care through primary healthcare workers, featured in WHO World Report on Hearing, 2021

## Director of Research and Policy, Division of Research and Health Equity

- Led a team of 12 in the development of a research portfolio, in support of 2,000 CHWs, introduced systems to support short- and long-term strategies; advanced primary healthcare systems in rural communities and produced 13 peer-reviewed publications.
- Liaised directly, at senior government level, with Ugandan Ministry of Health and WHO, established international collaborations with Makerere University School of Public Health, Uganda; University of Accra, Ghana; Cambridge University, UK; University of Oxford, UK.
- Originated and managed 4 major research projects, controlled a budget of £150,000, carried out research in accordance with government priorities and strategic objectives, <https://www.omnimed.org/program-leaders>.

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST, UK

## Academic Foundation Program Medical Doctor

## DIVISION OF GLOBAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS, US and Kenya

## Researcher

## Peer Reviewed Publications

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### Selected Publications (AI, Ethics, and Health Systems)

- **O'Donovan J. et al.** (2026) Governance, scale, and integration: building community health worker systems ready for artificial intelligence *The Lancet Primary Care* (*in press*)
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2022) Analysing 3,429 digital supervisory interactions between community health workers in sub-Saharan Africa: development, testing and validation of an open-access predictive machine learning web application. *Human Resources for Health* (*AI governance; ethics of supervision*).
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2024) The role and recognition of community health workers in research: a global survey. *The Lancet Global Health* (*epistemic justice; participatory ethics*).
- Holeman, I., Citrin, D. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2024) Building consensus on common features and interoperability use cases for community health information systems: a Delphi study. *BMJ Global Health* (*AI and data governance*).
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2020) 'We are the people whose opinions don't matter': a photovoice study exploring challenges faced by community health workers in Uganda. *Global Public Health* (*Participatory ethics*).
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2018) The use of participatory visual methods with community health workers: a systematic scoping review. *Global Public Health* (*Participatory ethics*).

### Additional Peer-Reviewed Publications (Health Systems & Digital Health)

- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2025) Costs and cost-effectiveness of community health worker programmes focussed on non-communicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries (2015–2024): a scoping literature review. *BMJ Global Health*.
- Stansert Katzen, L.S. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2025) Economic evaluations of community health worker programmes focussed on neglected tropical diseases in low- and middle-income countries (2015–2024): a scoping literature review. *PLOS Global Public Health*.
- Katzen, L.S. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2025) Time to prioritise community health workers: a decade of cost-effectiveness evidence. *The Lancet Primary Care*.
- Baskin, C. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2025) Essential aid made fully visible: understanding the proCHW financing landscape through analysis of accessible donor data sources. *BMJ Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2025) Costs and cost-effectiveness of integrated horizontal community health worker programmes in low- and middle-income countries (2015–2024): a scoping literature review. *BMJ Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2025) Costs and cost-effectiveness of community health worker programmes focussed on HIV, tuberculosis and malaria in low- and middle-income countries (2015–2024): a scoping literature review. *PLOS Global Public Health*.
- Ballard, M., Dahn, B., **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2025) One term to transform: universal health coverage through professional community health workers. *The Lancet*.
- Miranda, A.V. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2025) Professionalisation of community health workers: time for a formal contract. *International Journal of Health Planning and Management*.
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2021) Training, supervision and performance of community health workers in the delivery of ear and hearing care to 321 community members in rural Uganda. *Clinical Otolaryngology*.

- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2021) Roles for mHealth in supporting community health workers during COVID-19. *Global Health Promotion*.
- Winters, N. et al., **O'Donovan, J.** (2019) Using mobile technologies to support the training of community health workers in low- and middle-income countries: mapping the evidence. *BMJ Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan, J.**, Verkerk, M., Winters, N. et al. (2019) The role of community health workers in addressing the global burden of ear disease and hearing loss: a systematic scoping review. *BMJ Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2018) The potential challenges of implementing the community health extension worker programme in Uganda. *BMJ Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan, J. et al.** (2018) The ongoing training of community health workers in low- and middle-income countries: a systematic scoping review. *BMJ Open*.
- Winters, N., **O'Donovan, J.** and Geniets, A. (2018) A new era for community health in low- and middle-income countries? *The Lancet Global Health*.
- **O'Donovan J**, et al. (2016) Using low-cost Android tablets and instructional videos to teach clinical skills to medical students in Kenya: a prospective study. *JRSM Open*.
- **O'Donovan J**, Maruthappu M. (2015) Distant peer-tutoring of clinical skills using tablets with instructional videos and Skype: a pilot study in the UK and Malaysia. *Medical Teacher*.

## Edited Books

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- **Community Health Training: Bridging the Global Health Gap**, 2021, Editors: Geniets A, **O'Donovan J**, Hakimi L, Winters N. *Oxford University Press*
  - Edited volumes and chapters engage ethical questions of power, pedagogy, and accountability in the training and supervision of frontline health workers.
  - Forward by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, University Professor and Director, Centre for Sustainable Development, Columbia University, USA
  - Afterword by Professor Seye Abimbola, Prince Claus Chair of Global Health Utrecht University, Netherlands and Editor in Chief of BMJ Global Health
  - Coordinating over 25 authors from nine countries, including leading academics, policy makers and major non-governmental organisations responsible for the training and deployment of CHWs

## Book Chapters

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- **Approaches to Community Health Worker Training and Supervision.** In: 'Training for Community Health: Bridging the global health care gap.' Eds: Geniets A, O'Donovan J, Hakimi L, Winters N. Oxford University Press. Chapter 4, pp: 51-66, 2021
- **Towards a Pedagogy for Community Health Workers?** In: 'Training for Community Health: Bridging the global health care gap.' Eds: Geniets A, O'Donovan J, Hakimi L, Winters N. Oxford University Press. Chapter 12 pp: 195-202, 2021

## Invited Key Note and Panel Presentations (selected)

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- **"The future of Community Health Worker programmes in an age of uncertainty – evidence from a decade of economic evaluations"** – The Global Fund, November 2025. [Panel chair]
- **"The Role of AI in Digital Clinical Content Creation on YouTube – Opportunities and Ethical Challenges"** – The Royal College of Physicians, October 2025. [Key note]
- **"The equitable inclusion of Community Health Workers in Research Studies"** – London School of Economics, October 2024. [Invited panellist]
- **"Digital information as a determinant of health"** - Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health, July 2024. [Key note]
- **"Health Equity and AI on YouTube – what are the opportunities, challenges and threats?"** – Google Health, London, UK, January 2024. [Key note]
- **"When Clinicians Turn Creators"** – YouTube Health and Google UK summit, January 2023. [Key note and panel chair]
- **The Use of Photovoice to Inform Clinical Trials in Global Health**, - National Institute for Health Research-Medical Research Council Trials Methodology Research Partnership, UK, 2021 [Key note]
- **Engaging Community Health Workers in designing, delivering and evaluating a supervision program, Presented at:** CHW Central, Boston, USA (*online webinar*), 2021

- **Co-designing a digitally enhanced training and supervision program for Community Health Workers, Presented at:** University of Oxford Global Surgery Group – Grand Rounds, Oxford, UK, 2019
- **The future of Community Health Worker training, Presented at:** Oxford Symposium for Comparative and International Education, Oxford, UK, 2018
- **Digital training of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in rural Uganda – results of a pilot RCT, Presented at:** Cambridge Clinical Research Centre Symposium, Addenbrookes Hospital, CUH, UK, 2017
- **A novel training program for VHTs in Uganda using tablets and locally made instructional videos, Presented at:** Oxford International Health Congress, Oxford, UK, 2017

## Research Grants (selected)

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- **Anonymous Funder**, Mapping the landscape of AI use in Community Health Worker Programs. Principal Investigator, £100,000. 2025-2026.
- **National Institute for Health Research and Medical Research Council (NIHR-MRC) Trials Methodology Research Partnership (TMRP)**, Principal Investigator on a study exploring the role of participatory research methods to better inform clinical trial design in resource poor settings. One of five successfully awarded grants out of 157 applications. **£9,500**, 2020 – 2021
- **The John Fell Fund, University of Oxford Global CRF (0005267)**, Co-investigator on “Building an evidence network on technology-enhanced community health worker training in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).” Output: <https://africacentreforevidence.org/mapping-the-evidence-on-the-use-of-mobile-technology-to-support-the-training-of-community-health-workers/> **£60,000**, 2018 – 2019
- **British Medical Association Charitable Arm**, Principal Investigator on a major study to explore the feasibility of CHWs delivering ear and hearing care in rural communities in Uganda. Outputs: 3 peer-reviewed journal articles; community outreach and dissemination workshop; policy report to WHO. **£8,000**, 2018 – 2020
- **Wellcome Trust Centre for Global Health Research, ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) Program**, Co-investigator on a study using metagenomics to better understand waste treatment in low-cost sanitation. Disseminated lab findings through a knowledge exchange workshop. Outputs: Peer-reviewed journal article; community engagement workshop; multi-disciplinary knowledge-exchange workshop held in Uganda between collaborators from Ghana, UK, USA, and Uganda. **£22,500**, 2017 – 2019
- **The Ujenzi Charitable Foundation**, Principal Investigator on a study exploring the effectiveness of mobile technologies to support the clinical training of medical students in Kenya. Output: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2054270416645044> **£12,500**, 2014

## International Awards (selected)

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- **Skoll Foundation, 2025 Prize for Social Innovation**. Part of the executive leadership team at CHIC awarded the 2025 [Skoll Prize for Social Innovation](#). “The prestigious \$2 million award shines a light on the extraordinary leaders and organizations advancing transformational social change to create a more sustainable, peaceful, and prosperous world for all”. 2025
- **Google Tackling Health Equity through Information Quality (THE-IQ)**. Awarded the inaugural THE-IQ award from YouTube Health in recognition of work in addressing health inequalities on the platform. As part of the award, expanded content into different languages and worked with marginalised groups of patients to bring voices to the fore through a series of videos where they were collaborative participants. 2024
- **Velji Award – Emerging Leader in Global Health Innovation**. Winner of this prestigious international award at the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) Conference, in recognition of work developing digital training and supervision strategies for health workers in resource constrained settings. 2015