

Two New Public Health Champions Named by Harvard Chan School of Public Health



In a recent announcement, Dr. Karen DeSalvo, Chief Health Officer at Google, and Monica Bharel, Clinical Lead in Public Health, have been honoured as Public Health Champions by the prestigious Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Dr. Karen DeSalvo: Leading the Charge for Health Equity

A distinguished alumna of Harvard Chan, Dr. Karen DeSalvo, MSc '02, embodies a holistic approach to public health. With a career spanning various sectors, including medicine, public health, and technology, DeSalvo has consistently championed health equity and justice.

DeSalvo's mission stems from her personal journey, growing up in a low-resource community in Texas. She understands firsthand the profound impact of social determinants on health outcomes. Her experiences have fueled her commitment to ensuring that everyone has access to quality health care information.

Now serving as Chief Health Officer at Google, DeSalvo leverages the company's vast resources to promote health worldwide. By harnessing technology and collaboration, she aims to empower individuals with accessible, reliable health information.

Reflecting on her time at Harvard, DeSalvo credits the institution for equipping her with the tools and network needed to drive positive change. She emphasises the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing public health challenges.

Monica Bharel: Bridging Medicine and Public Health for Equity

Monica Bharel, MPH '12, is renowned for her dedication to equity in healthcare. Inspired by early experiences volunteering with vulnerable populations, Bharel integrates clinical care with a public health lens.

Bharel's career trajectory reflects her commitment to addressing systemic inequities. From serving as Massachusetts public health commissioner to advocating for policy change, she has consistently challenged the divide between public health and healthcare.

A recipient of the Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University, continues to drive innovation in data-driven interventions. She emphasises the importance of comprehensive data systems in understanding and addressing the social determinants of health.

Looking ahead, Bharel remains optimistic about the progress towards health equity, accelerated by global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. She stresses the importance of collaborative efforts across sectors in shaping a healthier future for all.

The recognition from Harvard Chan School underscores the impactful contributions of DeSalvo and Bharel in advancing public health on a global scale.

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