About the GHFutures2030 Commission: Interview with Ilona Kickbusch and Anurag Agrawal

In October 2019, *The Lancet* medical journal partnered with the *Financial Times* newspaper to establish a new commission called Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world.

Read this interview with the two chairs of the Commission, Professor Ilona Kickbusch and Dr Anurag Agrawal, to learn more about the Commission and why it was established:

Can you tell us more about yourselves?

[Ilona] I am from Germany but grew up in Asia. I am a professor and created the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. Before that, taught at several Universities and started the health promotion department at the World Health Organization. I advise governments on how to promote public health and to strengthen their policies.

[Anurag] I am a medical doctor and scientist from India. I help the Indian government develop policies to increase the benefits of science and technology for society. In my laboratory, my team and I study diseases that affect people's lungs such as asthma. We use digital technologies and data to find better ways to detect and treat these diseases. Recently, we have also been doing a lot of work to help the fight against COVID-19.

What is a *Lancet* Commission?

[Ilona] A *Lancet* Commission is a group of global experts who are asked to study a topic and come up with some ideas or recommendations to fix a problem. *The Lancet* has set up lots of commissions on different health issues but this one is the first to look at digital health with a particular focus on children and young people and the first to be done in partnership with the *Financial Times* newspaper.

So, what is this Commission looking at?

[Anurag] The Governing Health Futures 2030: Commission (called GHFutures2030 for short) was created to explore the ways that digital transformations are changing our health futures. Our goal was to suggest some actions that countries and organisations involved with health and/or digital can take so that the use of digital technologies and data helps us achieve UHC and improve the health and wellbeing of children and youth. These suggested actions or recommendations have specifically focused on improving the **governance** of digital health.

What does 'Governing Health Futures' mean exactly?

[Ilona] Well, 'governance' is a political process to better direct or shape something. In health governance we are thinking about who has the power to improve the health of a society and what rules and structures need to be in place to do so. In most countries, governments play

a large role in health governance but there are other important players too like communities, private businesses, international organisations, academic institutions, and healthcare providers who give advice and resources to governments. So when we talk about 'governing health futures' we are talking about the way we'd like to see governments and others shape the future of health at the individual level but also at the community level, taking into account the huge role that digital technologies and data are going to play.

[Anurag] A major problem that we found through the work of the Commission is that digital technologies are evolving much faster than the rules, laws, and policies that are supposed to control them. Future governance of digital health needs to be able to keep up with all the unknown changes that will take place.

Who else is on the Commission?

[Ilona] In addition to Anurag and I, the Commission is made up of 17 fantastic experts from all around the world including scientists, professors, academics, economists, and decision makers like people who work for global organisations focused on health and technology.

How have young people been involved in GHFutures2030?

[Anurag] The work of the Commissioners has been supported by a young team of researchers, and a dedicated youth team which consulted with other young people from around the world.

[Ilona] Young people contributed to the report through participating in several workshops and consultations to tell us what they think about digital health and how it should be better governed. We also tried to better understand young people's views on digital health through a big multi-country survey and focus groups.