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# Science-Based Policy in Action:

## A Recap of the Science for Health Policy Summit

January 2026

## Executive Summary

This report summarizes the proceedings of the [Science for Health Policy Summit](#) hosted by the [Center for Healthcare Policy and Research](#) and the [Division of General Internal Medicine and Bioethics](#) at UC Davis. The Summit convened individuals spanning various roles across policy, research, and academia, including policymakers, legislative staff, representatives from nonprofit and philanthropic foundations and policy institutes, researchers, academics, clinicians, and students. Through focused panel sessions and keynotes, presenters and the audience engaged in a discourse to identify challenges often faced in translating health-related research into policy and ways to address communication gaps between scientific experts and policymakers.

Notable challenges to effective incorporation of health-related research into policy that emerged from the discussion included misalignment between the gradual pace at which research is conducted and the rapidity required for effective policy decision-making, poor communication of scientific results into compelling narratives that resonate with policymakers and the public, and ongoing mistrust of science and heightened misinformation, particularly in the age of social media.

Recommendations provided by panelists for bridging the gap between policymakers and researchers were numerous. They included presenting research in digestible and easy to understand formats, emphasizing the human stories behind data that target audiences will connect with, leveraging social media, incorporating faster methods for timelier dissemination of research, forming relationships with legislative staffers and offering decisive expert advice when presented with the opportunity, remaining current with pressing policy issues, and engaging trusted community members in sharing knowledge.



Speaker bios and videos are available on our website: [health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/education/science-for-health-policy-summit](https://health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/education/science-for-health-policy-summit)

The Summit provided researchers, clinicians and students an opportunity to connect and network with policy counterparts and left attendees with a call to action to improve collaboration to enhance healthcare-related evidence to policy research to better support the wellbeing of all Californians.

The Science for Health Policy Summit took place on October 29, 2025, in the Aggie Square building on the UC Davis Health campus in Sacramento. The Summit, which convened researchers, clinicians, students, and policy experts, centered around improving the use of research in policymaking and provided recommendations and strategies to equip better communication between

academics, policymakers, and the public. The Summit was made possible through funding from the UC Davis [School of Medicine](#) Impact Symposia Award, which supports the convening of thought leaders to strengthen collaboration on pressing issues.

## Welcome and Opening Remarks: Lessons Learned from Science-Based Policy in Action

Welcome and opening remarks were given by Drs. Susan Murin, Dean of the UC Davis School of Medicine, and Courtney Lyles, Director of the Center for Healthcare Policy and Research.

Dr. Susan Murin welcomed attendees to the UC Davis Health campus and the Aggie Square Innovation District. Murin highlighted the Summit's theme, communicating science results, which she noted could not be more timely or vital. "Communicating science results, i.e., evidence, to inform policy and bridging communication gaps among key constituent groups is more essential than ever in our current climate." She described UC Davis' fundamental belief in fostering and strengthening partnerships with neighboring communities to improve their quality of life and socioeconomic vitality, a mission that extends to working with individuals like those gathered at the event to improve the health of all Californians. Murin closed her remarks by expressing her hope that attendees find inspiration and connections that will create new ways to integrate evidence into the policymaking process.

**"Communicating science results—i.e., evidence—to inform policy and bridging communication gaps among key constituent groups is more essential than ever..."**

- Dr. Susan Murin, Dean,  
UC Davis School of Medicine

Following Murin's remarks, Dr. Courtney Lyles shared level-setting comments to frame the day's conversations. Chiefly, the stakes for evidence-based health policymaking are high. Despite the U.S. spending more on healthcare than our international counterparts (nearly 18% of the nation's GDP), our health outcomes are poorer than those of our peer countries. Additionally, public trust in science has declined, dropping from 35-39% pre-pandemic to 23-26% in 2023-2024. Similar declines exist for policymakers and government officials. Finally, policy is essential for the frontline operations of our public health and healthcare systems that rely on evidence-based policymaking. Lyles concluded her framing remarks by summarizing the ABCs of evidence-based policymaking.



Dr. Courtney Lyles, director of the Center for Healthcare Policy and Research.

**The ABCs of evidence-based policymaking:**  
**A**ccountability,  
**B**est evidence,  
**C**ollaboration and continuous learning

These principles face threats in the current environment that include misinformation, misaligned timing, and shifting attention spans. However, a way forward through these challenges exists, and it includes relationship-building, timely, quick information sharing, and using a new common language, one through which we actively listen to and acknowledge communities.



## Panel 1: Fireside Chat with Xavier Becerra

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This panel was moderated by Dr. Courtney Lyles. Xavier Becerra is the 25<sup>th</sup> U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary, former Attorney General for California, and a former US Congressman.

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Lyles began the discussion with former HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra's reactions to the ABCs of policymaking, specifically as it relates to the scientific integrity campaign that he led under President Biden's administration. Becerra emphasized the importance of maintaining scientific integrity in policymaking and noted changes in how scientific research is currently being utilized in policy decisions.

Becerra referenced President Biden's "Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking," which was signed during Biden's first week in office. The memorandum stated that "scientific findings should never be distorted or influenced by political considerations" and acknowledged that such inappropriate political interference in researchers' work can erode public trust. The memorandum was subsequently revoked by the Trump administration's executive order "Restoring Gold Standard Science," which modified many of the integrity and transparency policies the memorandum had established.



*Dr. Courtney Lyles and Xavier Becerra discuss research and policymaking.*

Becerra described current requirements for research used for policy applications; noting that some standards may be difficult for researchers to achieve in practice. He expressed concern about maintaining the relationship between scientific evidence and policy development.

Importantly, Becerra provided perspective on what policymakers need from researchers, especially during critical moments where there is tension between having rigorous evidence and needing quick responses. Reflecting on experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and needing to make rapid decisions on masking, vaccine requirements, and

other public health measures, Becerra shared that what truly helps policymakers during those tough moments is having options for solutions. Additionally, researchers need to offer options that have some rigor. "Make sure that the options you give have been to some degree tested. They have some rigor behind them, and they have some true data that [supports] them. Don't just give me your anecdotal evidence. Give me something that's based upon something I can touch in science and then let me decide which of the three options is best."

In response to questions about how researchers can better communicate with the public and be more prepared for future public health emergencies, Becerra encouraged the audience to start social media

accounts: “We are being swamped by those who profess to be experts who have never done science, and they are beating you at your game. That's the most unfortunate part. People are following some of the craziest things [on social media].”

Becerra also encouraged the researchers and clinicians in the room to take a more active role in public communication about their fields. He noted challenges in how medical and scientific information reaches the public.

Regarding science communication, Becerra observed that researchers face competition in the information landscape. He suggested that scientists could be more effective in sharing their knowledge with broader audiences.

**“You may need that [local] football coach to be standing next to you to communicate the message that it would be a good idea for your kids to be masked up during a really contagious disease [outbreak].”**

*- Xavier Becerra, former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary*

Becerra proposed one approach: partnering with trusted community members when sharing public health guidance. As the former HHS Secretary explained, “You may need that [local] football coach to be standing next to you to communicate the message that it would be a good idea for your kids to be masked up during a really contagious disease [outbreak].” He suggested that effective public communication about science may benefit from collaboration with locally trusted voices.



*UC Davis Professor Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola and Science for Health Policy Summit speakers Carolina Reyes and Xavier Becerra.*

Becerra reflected that establishing trustworthiness, effectively using social media, and communicating with the public are not the strengths many researchers have. However, they can develop these skills and will have to as they must “be the ones who decide who the voices of reason are.” Lyles added that these skills may be especially unfamiliar as they are not part of scientists’ formal training. Scientists want to be certain about the data, but they must become comfortable with stating facts about the strength of the evidence and sharing with authenticity, being honest with what they do and do not know and trusting the public with what data they do

have. Becerra advised, “You don't have to always be the most expert. You just have to be willing to talk to folks at their level.”

## Panel 2: Academic Researchers Informing Policy through Research

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This panel was moderated by Dr. Tonya Fancher, co-host of the Summit and Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean of Workforce Innovation and Education Quality Improvement. Panel members included Drs. Amy Barnhorst, Psychiatrist, UC Davis Department of Emergency Medicine, Associate Director of the California Firearm Violence Research Center; Elizabeth Magnan, Associate Professor, UC Davis Department of Family and Community Medicine, Vice Chair for Medical Effectiveness and Public Health for the California Health Benefits Review Program (CHBRP); Carolina Reyes, Health Sciences Associate Clinical Professor, UC Davis Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; and An-Chi Tsou, Principal Analyst, CHBRP.

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Dr. Tonya Fancher began the session by inviting panelists to introduce themselves by sharing their most discussed work.

Dr. Amy Barnhorst shared the genesis of her policy engagement as a clinician was due to observation that following mass shootings there was an increase in the number of children and young adults who made threats or posted concerning comments on social media or had been identified to authorities as being in danger of perpetrating mass violence. This realization led to Barnhorst's involvement in policy via her efforts to support implementation of Red Flag Laws, known as Gun Violence Restraining Orders in California.



*Dr. Amy Barnhorst shared insights into her work as a researcher.*

Dr. Elizabeth Magnan shared her California Health Benefits Review Program (CHBRP) work on coverage of fertility treatments, often called the IVF Bill [SB 729], and the extensive effort it took to provide CHBRP data analyses for multiple iterations of the bill. The most pressing questions she had to navigate included clarifying who would use the proposed IVF services as well as who should have access to them and in what ways – given that policymakers need to know the answers to these questions as they consider sweeping legislative changes to change coverage for these services.

Dr. Carolina Reyes spoke to her work for the State of California's Department of Public Health addressing the maternal mortality crisis, particularly reducing preventable deaths, which account for at least 60% of cases. Her role as a physician listening to patients helped her participate in state-wide action to summarize the maternal mortality crisis well before wider national conversations on this topic.

Dr. An-Chi Tsou, who works closely with Magnan at CHBRP, shared her work on evaluating insurance benefit mandate bills for the California legislature on many topics. She used an example of coverage for GLP-1 medications as a current hot topic; policymakers' showed increased interest about this



class of medications given their widespread use coupled with high cost. She works with her team to provide unbiased, evidence-based estimates of the impact (clinical, public health, and cost) of expanded insurance coverage of these medications in California.

Following these descriptions of panelists' work, Fancher asked panelists to consider what it takes to translate research into policy.

Tsou provided perspective from working at the intersection between scientists and policymakers and described her process of interpretation and translation between the two. She starts by asking herself how she would describe the concepts of a new bill to her grandmother. As Tsou stated, "We're talking about people [in the legislature] who are smart, but they're not familiar with our research. They can understand data, but you must present it in a way that is approachable." At CHBRP, they focus not only on creating in-depth detailed reports in language that people understand but also on meeting people where they are and in formats that are accessible to them. This often means the information is "bite-sized," as Tsou stressed the importance of identifying the top three takeaways for the policymaker.



*Dr. Tonya Fancher asks a question to her panel.*

In a segue to consider the role of social media in making information accessible, Barnhorst referred to Becerra's earlier remarks about the importance of scientists having a social media presence. She acknowledged that a personal post increased her followers on social media; however, this increased presence online translated directly into attention from journalists to provide comments on larger conversations – where she was able to provide professional and content expertise in new ways and on a large scale. While media requests were sometimes tailored for her, she also noted that journalists

sometimes seek quotes from individuals who might be the most popular, but may not necessarily be the most informed – sometimes "the loudest voice with the most followers, not the person with the most expertise" – underscoring why scientists should not shy away from active dialogue on social media with clarity on what they do and do not know.

Reyes stressed that evidence-based policymaking is about identifying what the need is, what must be done about the need, and channeling energy and expertise appropriately. For example, when reflecting on her work on the committee that led to the production of the landmark book, "Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care" in 2001, which officially documented the differences in how people of color experience the U.S. healthcare system, she found in the subsequent years following that publication how hard change can be to implement. The healthcare system did not immediately change after the Unequal Treatment report, much to the dismay of individuals like Reyes who hoped that it would revolutionize practices. However, various agencies did start to consider equity measures that would be foundational to begin tracking to

address inequalities. Eventually, these were incorporated into the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) reporting requirements after nearly two decades. In providing this anecdote, Reyes left researchers with her perspective that for policymaking, “It’s been about: what do we [as scientists or as policymakers] think we need? How do we think outside the box to incorporate those things so that we define what’s involved in health in a much broader perspective than we ever did?”

Barnhorst reflected that not having an “us versus them” mindset has been crucial in her own work to make progress in firearm control, which has longstanding relevance. Recognizing that protection of Second Amendment rights is a significant cultural perspective in the gun control conversation, her work has directly included proponents of gun rights. Solutions for these issues are made “by partnering with [gun rights proponents], by making inroads, by having trusted messengers, by working within their systems and their people and having the people that they trust... be the ones who come up with the messaging, the messenger, the materials.”



*Members of the audience at the Science for Health Policy Summit at Aggie Square.*

As the session ended, Magnan left the audience with a charge “to learn to speak everyone's vocabulary and learn that there are different vocabularies. As we start to learn how to hear each other talk, how to understand what we're really saying, and how to translate the vocabulary from one field to another, I think we can better start communicating our message and hearing the message from others.”



## Panel 3: Policymakers' Real-World Needs for Research and Evidence

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Moderated by Dr. Richard Pan, Senior Lecturer, UC Davis Department of Public Health Sciences. Panelists included Rosielyn Pulmano, Health Policy Consultant in the Office of the Speaker of the Assembly; Scott Ogus, Deputy Staff Director of the State Senate's Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review; Carolyn Chu, Chief Deputy, California Legislative Analyst's Office; and Dr. Donald Moulds, Chief Health Director California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS).

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This panel brought together policymakers to share their experiences working with academics and researchers. Panelists began the session by sharing ways in which they believe researchers could help inform policy.



*Dr. Richard Pan speaking at the Science for Health Policy Summit.*

Rosielyn Pulmano encouraged researchers to speak at informational hearings and share research directly with the legislature, expressing her team's openness to receiving emails to the Chair of the Health Committee or the Speakers' Office. Additionally, Pulmano connects with researchers directly as the need arises, and their office keeps a list of people to liaise with for pressing issues. She asked that researchers be sensitive to the quick turnaround when these requests from a legislative office are made, as they often need answers for policymakers within short timeframes.

Scott Ogus challenged researchers to always consider the story behind data. Given his own training as a scientist, he understands researchers' desires to have great results but notes that without a "compelling story to tell, [the] data isn't going to be useful to anybody." Ogus went on to provide additional examples from his own career, reflecting that "There is a lot of decision-making that happens under conditions of uncertainty in the legislature... legislators want to solve problems. They want to solve them now. They don't always have time to wait for the randomized control trial to come out to prove there is a causal link between x and y. They just need to do something." He also stressed that it is important for researchers to recognize that sometimes even though compelling data "plaintively waits for a solution," it may take time for the politics to catch up. Ogus provided an example of ongoing efforts to secure coverage for hearing aids for children, which has well substantiated evidence pointing to its benefits. Despite the evidence, it has taken more than eight years to reach a potential solution, which is still under consideration [via SB 635].

In her role at the California Legislative Analyst's Office, Carolyn Chu is looking to research to guide budget decisions in their fiscally minded office, especially when there are deficit concerns like those the state has been navigating over the past few years. Specifically, as Chu described, they review the research in times of state deficit to "understand how can the state pull back in ways that are potentially least harmful? How do you measure the 'least harmful', and who are the harms going to be

put against or who are the benefits going to accrue to?” Research also helps Chu’s office determine how they can leverage the social benefits of policies that may not necessarily accrue tangible benefits to the state, at least not immediately. Pinpointing benefits such as potential future economic output are possible with research input, and they rely on scientists to help identify any secondary and tertiary effects of social benefits, so this can be communicated to voters.

Next, when discussing how researchers should relay information to policymakers, CalPERS’s Dr. Donald Moulds acknowledged it can be difficult to cold call someone in the legislature in the middle of session to begin to introduce research for the first time. He reflected that it is important for researchers to have cultivated relationships ahead of time. Moulds’ practical advice to realistically share research is to also make use of “advocacy organizations that have reputations in the legislature for taking evidence seriously and for honest brokering.”

As a final point, one thing researchers should note from this session is how accessible the policymaker panelists and their colleagues are to the research community, which may come as a surprise to those in academia. They expressed eagerness to connect with research and encouraged listeners to reach out via email or phone to committee staffers directly. As Pulmano stated at the start of the session, be responsive if committee staff reach out regarding research, and know they will do the same.

## Panel 4: Bridging the Researcher-Policymaker Divide: Lessons for the Future

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This panel was moderated by Dr. Richard Kravitz, Professor in the Division of General Medicine, and former Director of UC Center Sacramento. Panel members included Tani Cantil-Sakauye, President and CEO of the Public Policy Institute of California and former Chief Justice of California; Evan White, Executive Director of UC Berkeley California Policy Lab; Katie Heidorn, Director of State Health Policy at California Health Care Foundation; and Dr. Amy Gilson, Deputy Director for External and Legislative Affairs in the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA).

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Dr. Richard Kravitz introduced the audience to individuals who have worked on both sides of the policy/research divide. He framed this session as an opportunity to gain insight from the panelists on how best to bridge the gaps between policy and research.



*Dr. Richard Kravitz asking a question to his panel.*

Following introductions, panelists reflected on how scientists can successfully translate research into policies and provided suggestions for effectively doing so. Dr. Amy Gilson encouraged listeners to know their goals and what role they want to occupy, specifically whether they are advocates or advisors. She differentiated the two by describing the former as a role appropriate for those with policies they want to see implemented, and the latter as a position better suited for individuals who want

to help people know what the data is “so they can make smart decisions.” Gilson also noted the importance of effective communication, both written and oral, along with effective listening. When communicating, she advised thinking about the Greek rhetorical strategies of persuasion: logos, ethos, and pathos. Scientists, she argued, are commonly endowed with ethos (credibility and trustworthiness) as representatives of think tanks or universities. They are also adept at logos, using their knowledge to make logical arguments and present statistical data. But scientists need to explore pathos, or the human stories which appeal to emotions, more consistently to communicate effectively.

Katie Heidorn reiterated advice from prior panelists recommending proactivity from researchers in sharing their findings. She advised sending new research or publications even if it may not be immediately useful as there may come a point while preparing a bill when that information becomes relevant. Additionally, Heidorn encouraged proactive relationship-building to better anticipate legislature research needs and have an avenue for promoting evidence-based decision-making. “Meet with those [key committee consultants] and build relationships... Those committee consultants are the people who are in it, and they are the legislature's experts on those topics.”

**“Those committee consultants are the people who are in it, and they are the legislature's experts on those topics.”**

*- Katie Heidorn, Director, State Health Policy, California Health Care Foundation*

As researchers are looking to form these relationships, Tani Cantil-Sakauye added that they should go into a legislator's office prepared to be concise and pithy as time is limited. Offering a few ways to prepare, she shared her prework prior to a conversation, including knowing who donates to the policymaker, what their interests are, what bills have been successful, and which ones have failed. Cantil-Sakauye encouraged personalizing communication by knowing backgrounds, establishing you are reaching out to be a resource, and following up after the interaction with those resources. This helps with becoming one of the first places the policymaker and their team may reach out to when they are seeking information. And again, how that information is presented also matters as the long reports need to be distilled into a format that is “nimble and ready” so they can be useful to the policymaker. In Cantil-Sakauye's opinion, the best scenario is not one where the researcher spends a significant amount of time speaking, but one where the policymaker is asking questions because the information is relevant.

Evan White felt it was important for researchers to understand that the “policymaking process can and should be based on lots of other factors beyond the research.” Researchers, in his opinion, often fall into the trap of thinking their research is the most important aspect and can be very immersed in their profession. This can lead to the belief that policymakers must be made to “see the light” through the data. He encouraged researchers to adjust their perspective, instead of expecting policymakers to change.

**“Bring community members into conversations about research and policy.”**

*- Dr. Amy Gilson, Deputy Director, External and Legislative Affairs, California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment*



Next, the panel moved onto topics of engagement. Gilson introduced the importance of bringing community members into conversations about research and policy by describing OEHHA's approach to forming research partnerships, as efforts are ultimately meant to support communities. As she described, the agency will often contract with a community group or nonprofit along with academia so that the research they do "is co-developed and crafted with the community's needs, and that end result is in mind." Engagement with community groups is particularly helpful as they can often do things researchers and policymakers may not be able to do, given they are already working with the community and are trusted messengers. Panelists were also asked how they push back against disinformation, particularly on social media. White pointed to the value of training people, including legislative staff and members, on how to be "good consumers" of research. Gilson shared how OEHHA reaches out to sources that incorrectly report their data and requests corrections.

## Closing Keynote: A Future Agenda for Science-Based Health Policy

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The closing keynote speaker was Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of the American Medical Association and JAMA Network.

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In the final session of the day, Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo closed the summit with a few poignant reflections and takeaway messages for the audience.

Bibbins-Domingo started with the analogy, "Scientists make the stones, and they give them to builders," as a way of explaining how people should think of what it means to do policy-relevant research. Individuals who choose this line of work do so for altruistic reasons; they have a desire to see change in the world, better health for patients, communities, and the population at large. This analogy speaks to key themes that have emerged throughout the day. Accomplishing the goal of improving health for people is a team effort and people have distinct roles to play. There must be an intentional act of transferring information so others, the "builders", can use it. Additionally, the "builders" must want the information and apply it.

**"Scientists make the stones, and they give them to builders."**

*- Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo,  
Editor-in-Chief, JAMA*

Bibbins-Domingo encouraged researchers to "understand that [they] are not living in isolation." Minds are not changed because of a brilliant paper a researcher wrote. For researchers to make changes in the world, they must consider the perspectives of others working in different arenas. "Think about what it is that they think about, care about, and what motivates them." One way to do this is by being aware of issues that are happening at local, state, and federal levels. As Bibbins-Domingo would say in keeping with her analogy, "get to know the builders."

Bibbins-Domingo's key takeaways, or lessons for researchers, could be summarized as follows:

- 1) Know the policy landscape: Knowledge of the environment enables researchers to tailor their presentations of evidence in ways that are more relevant. Giving examples from her own work, Bibbins-Domingo shared experiences publishing papers that had better



*Members of the audience at the Science for Health Policy Summit listen to the keynote address.*

reception and were ultimately more impactful because their research team was aware of ongoing debates in federal agencies that would result in rule changes.

Understanding the importance of timing is a crucial part of knowing the landscape. Using her own experience as an example, Bibbins-Domingo shared how during the COVID-19 pandemic she and colleagues analyzed data that pointed to excess mortality by occupation. While they could have waited to publish the data in peer-reviewed literature, they chose to share via the preprint server, online repositories that allow researchers to share early versions of papers, as the state was currently debating how to implement vaccine distribution. Along with a few well-timed tweets from her fellow researcher, the team had the opportunity to influence decision-making, and California ultimately did include occupation as a risk factor to prioritize for vaccine allocation. Their future peer-reviewed publication was then included in briefs that informed the Supreme Court case regarding occupational health.

Bibbins-Domingo instructed researchers to not only know the policy landscape, but to also understand that timing matters. While research may typically move at a slower pace, researchers may at times need to move from their typical position of critiquing decisions after they have happened, to a place where they are instead thinking more proactively.

- 2) “Make really good stones”: Bibbins-Domingo argues that while academics may be passionate about a certain type of policy change, they must be critical of their own work so it can withstand scrutiny from skeptics. “Making really good stones means we have to do the bread-and-butter things we are taught as academics – to be skeptical, to be objective, to be dispassionate, to really try and poke holes in all those things that we believe in so that the skeptic who is reading your paper is going to say ‘Oh okay, yeah, I’m convinced.’”

This skill is hard to cultivate but is the reason why scientists are valuable to policymakers. Scientists should continue to think about how their research can meet the highest rigorous standards and can be published in the places their peers read and respect.

- 3) Be better communicators: Bibbins-Domingo added her voice to the call from other panelists who encouraged researchers to become better communicators.

While several speakers have pointed to the need to become social media savvy, a few have also stressed that concise reporting of findings through a single sentence that is digestible is also powerful. Bibbins-Domingo reiterated this point and shared advice she received from her mentors. “What’s going to be the bottom-line sentence in the abstract? What’s the one sentence that is going to summarize this result?” From her perspective as a

journal editor, she expressed her worries that researchers have lost this skill and noted seeking out training to enhance it is necessary.



**Key takeaways from  
Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo:**

- Know the policy landscape
- “Make really good stones”
- Be better communicators

Bibbins-Domingo closed by humorously reminding the audience to have confidence and be “one-handed” researchers, referring to researchers’ general avoidance of being definitive in sharing findings. “Policymakers want to talk to one-handed researchers. Unfortunately, most researchers say, ‘on the one hand, this result is this, but on the other, you could look at it that way.’” Policymakers,

however, need and rely on clear answers. As experts, researchers need to be able to provide those answers because if they do not, someone less informed may.

## Conclusion

The lessons from the day were many, and Bibbins-Domingo reiterated this consistent message from the Summit: researchers must own their data confidently, become better storytellers of that data, and know when to partner with those who are more effective in communication to ensure data is used appropriately. UC Davis will continue the conversations started at the Summit in future gatherings focused on improving communication and collaboration between researchers and policymakers.

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