

Biography Professor Kasisomayajula Viswanath



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Dr. K. “Vish” Viswanath is Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH) and in the McGraw-Patterson Center for Population Sciences at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI). He is also the Faculty Director of the Health Communication Core of the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center (DF/HCC). Other additional administrative and scientific leadership positions held by Dr. Viswanath include: Director of the Center for Translational Communication Science, DFCI; Director, Harvard Chan India Research Center and Director, Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness, Harvard Chan. He is the founding Director of DF/HCC’s Enhancing Communications for Health Outcomes (ECHO) Laboratory.

Dr. Viswanath’s work is driven by two fundamental concerns: (a) how to center equity in drawing on translational communication science to promote health and well-being for ALL population groups, and (b) to involve community-based organizations and stakeholders through participatory research in promoting social change. The ultimate goal of the program of research in his lab is to influence public health policy and practice through knowledge translation and translational communication. His work draws from literatures in communication science, social epidemiology, dissemination and implementation, and social and health behavior sciences.

His work so far has documented the relationship between communication inequalities, poverty and health disparities, and knowledge translation to address health disparities. He has written more than 300 journal articles and book chapters concerning communication inequalities and health disparities, knowledge translation, public health communication campaigns, e-health and digital divide, public health emergency preparedness and the delivery of health communication interventions to underserved populations. He is the Co-Editor of four books and monographs: *Mass Media, Social Control and Social Change* (Iowa State University Press, 1999), *Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research & Practice*, 5th Ed. (Jossey Bass, 2015), *The Role of Media in Promoting and Reducing Tobacco Use* (National Cancer Institute, 2008) and *A Socioecological Approach to Addressing Tobacco-Related Health Disparities* (National Cancer Institute, 2017) and a co-author of *The First 1000 Days of Life: Lessons from Social and Behavior Change Communication* (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2021). He was also the Editor of the Social and Behavioral Research section of the 12-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (Blackwell Publishing, 2008)

He has served and continues to serve on several national committees including for the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM). He is currently the Chair of NASEM’s Consensus Study Committee on Understanding and Addressing Science Misinformation, a member of the Standing Committee on Advancement of Science Communication at NASEM, and was a member of NASEM’s



Planning Committee on The Public Health Infodemic and Trust in Public Health as a National Security Threat: A Workshop.

In recognition of his academic and professional achievements, Dr. Viswanath received several awards and honors.

For more information about Dr. Viswanath's research, visit <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/viswanathlab/>.