

Mathematician Awarded OBE for Pandemic Modelling

The IMA offers its congratulations to Dr Ellen Brooks Pollock FIMA who was awarded an OBE for ‘services to the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling and SAGE during the COVID-19 Response’.



Dr Ellen Brooks Pollock, Senior Lecturer in Infectious Disease Mathematical Modelling at the University of Bristol, is an authority on mathematical modelling of the spread of infectious diseases.

Ellen has been on the *Mathematics Today* Editorial Board since 2017 and is passionate about communicating mathematical modelling in non-technical ways. She won the Catherine Richards Prize, with Dr Ken Eames FIMA, for their article Pigs Didn't Fly, but Swine Flu about modelling the H1N1 influenza pandemic and guest edited the 2019 special issue on Medicine and Biology with Professor Reidun Twarock FIMA.

More recently, Ellen guest-edited the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* Special Issue ‘Modelling that shaped the early COVID-19 pandemic response in the UK’.

She regularly contributes to the SPI-M modelling group, a subgroup of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) that provides modelling evidence to the UK government, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ellen developed a methodology for condensing multiple policy options into a single figure that was used by the highest levels of government to manage and plan the easing of lockdown, including planning for the partial re-opening of schools in June 2020, the full re-opening of schools in September 2020, and the vaccination rollout.

She is also the Bristol co-lead for the JUNIPER (Joint Universities Pandemic and Epidemiological Research) consortium.

Dr Ellen Brooks Pollock said:

Infectious disease modelling is a fantastic example of applied maths at work. During the COVID pandemic, disease modelling has formed an important part of the scientific evidence base used to inform decision-making in the UK.

It's a privilege to be able to contribute to the COVID pandemic response along with many other scientists and mathematicians, and I'm delighted to receive an OBE for modelling.

For more about Ellen and her COVID-related work, see tinyurl.com/EBP-Bristol-OBE and an interview at women.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/2021/03/08/ellen-brooks-pollock/