

Dr. Jennifer Olsen
Executive Director
Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers

Dr. Jennifer Olsen, an experienced epidemiologist, serves as executive director of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers (RCI), which promotes the health, strength, and resilience of caregivers throughout the United States.

Prior to joining RCI, Olsen managed the Ending Pandemics in Our Lifetime initiative at the Skoll Global Threats Fund – whose mission was to drive large-scale change by investing in and connecting with those dedicated to solving five of the world’s greatest threats: climate change, pandemics, water security, nuclear proliferation, and conflict in the Middle East.

In this role, Olsen launched major initiatives around the world to engage communities to report and respond to emerging health threats. These efforts reduced the spread of disease, decreased the scope of emerging outbreaks, and preserved government funding by avoiding potential trade restrictions. She also co-created the Epihack™ process, convening 12 hackathon-style events with more than 500 technologists and public health experts from over 70 countries participating. The events produced tools utilized by national governments in eight countries.

Olsen also served as Fusion Division Director in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As division director, she developed and implemented an analytics platform to increase awareness and information sharing during emergencies. This tool was deployed during Superstorm Sandy, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, among others. Her efforts reduced situational awareness gaps from 48 hours to under four hours.

Olsen has also directed disease surveillance activities for large scale special events, including the G-8 and G-20 summits, State of the Union Addresses, the 2009 Presidential Inauguration, and Democratic and Republican National Conventions. She was advisor on the development of a Federal Interagency Information Collection Plan for the 2009 H1N1 Influenza outbreak. She also served with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, where she conducted modeling and simulation analysis with a focus on epidemiological scenarios.

Her dissertation research focused on utilizing non-traditional information sources such as social media to inform public health action. In 2018, Olsen was a TEDMED Research Scholar, identifying and validating presentations across health and medical fields for the TEDMED stage. She also previously served on the advisory board for Business on Network – a technology start-up in Thailand – and on the National Academy of Medicine’s Forum on Microbial Threats.

Olsen holds a B.A. in biomathematics from Rutgers University, an M.P.H. in Epidemiology from The George Washington University, and a Dr.P.H. from the University of North Carolina.