



Episode 5: Translating Duke Health Initiative: In the coming year and beyond, how will Duke address society's most significant scientific and healthcare challenges?

Narrator:

Hi and welcome to viewpoint with Dean Mary Klotman from the Duke University School of Medicine. Today we spoke with Dean Klotman and asked her "How will Duke address society's most significant scientific and healthcare challenges in the coming year and beyond?"

Dean Klotman:

I think the big opportunity today is that we can put together teams of scientists to address some of our biggest challenges. And one of those approaches that we're using is called the Translating Duke Health Initiative. We've identified five areas where we think we can put multidisciplinary teams together, and we can really make some progress. The five areas are kind of the obvious ones - cardiovascular disease. Why? Because it continues to be the major cause of death. Neuroscience, because we know dementia is becoming an increasing problem in our aging population. Certainly, children's health, with the idea that if we can identify risk factors early in life we can prevent later-in-life disease. Cancer, and we've chosen specifically to focus on metastatic disease as a major cause of morbidity and mortality. And then, immunology, because we know the immune system and harnessing the immune system is the underpinning of most diseases and therapeutic approaches today. So with that idea we are putting together teams approaching these major areas.

So brain disease to me is one of the most intriguing. We are entering into a new discovery for chronic brain diseases, particularly dementia. But the challenge is that those diseases are recognized way too late in the process. So the idea under the neuroscience initiative is to really move the science early in terms of being able to recognize diseases before they become symptomatic and that would hopefully give us some clues for early intervention that would allow repair, whereas currently we think we're identifying disease when we can no longer figure out any repair pathways.

So this is going to be one of our approaches multidisciplinary, bringing together technology, and really taking on some of our most pressing challenges.

Narrator:

Viewpoint is a production of the Duke University School of Medicine. Tune in each month for Dean Mary Klotman's thoughts and ideas about important and timely topics and issues related to medical education, science and discovery, and patient care.

For more information please visit [med school dot Duke dot edu backslash viewpoint](https://medschool.duke.edu/backslash/viewpoint).