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Dr. Mahon is a board-certified pediatrician and infectious disease epidemiologist. She received her medical training at the University of California, San Francisco and her public health degree from the University of California, Berkeley. She trained in the Epidemic Intelligence Service at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Subsequently, Dr. Mahon has worked as a pediatrician and as an epidemiologist in a wide range of settings in government, academics, and industry. She has broad experience in surveillance and outbreak control for vaccine-preventable diseases and enteric diseases and is an author of more than 100 peer-reviewed scientific publications. During the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic, she worked in several leadership positions at CDC, including as CDC's principal investigator for the Sierra Leone Trial to Introduce a Vaccine against Ebola (STRIVE).