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Christina Pagel is Professor of Operational Research (a branch of applied mathematics) at University College London (UCL) and Director of the UCL Clinical Operational Research Unit. Her main research area is using mathematical tools to support delivery of health services. This includes combining mathematical models and analysis of routinely collected national and local datasets to support service delivery and design both locally and nationally. She runs a large programme of work in understanding and communicating outcomes for people born with congenital heart disease, which has included the development and implementation of the method used nationally for 30-day survival following paediatric heart surgery.

She is co-director of the new UCL CHIMERA hub where researchers will examine anonymised data from 40,000 patients at University College London Hospital (UCLH) and Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), to develop a better understanding using mathematical modelling of how people's physiology changes during ill health and recovery.

Since May 2020, she has been a member of Independent SAGE, a group of scientists who are working together to provide independent scientific advice to the UK government and public on how to minimise deaths and support Britain's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.