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# Hack Aotearoa

## Q&A #1

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# Hamish Huggard

Hamish Huggard is a computer science student at the University of Auckland, and works on data science projects with Orion Health. He is competing in the Hack Aotearoa 2020 datathon, and Hack Aotearoa interviewed him at the beginning of the final work session.

**Hack Aotearoa:** *Has the datathon been a good experience for you?*

**Hamish Huggard:** Yes, it's been a lot of fun. A lot of good learning experiences.

**HA:** *I know it's still a little bit early, but have you found a solution or are you coming to a solution through collaborative work with people from other fields?*

**HH:** I think it is too soon to say. I think it will be very tight to pull everything together. We have had a lot of trouble extracting the data, but I think we have finally managed to get this done at about 6 o'clock last night and it's going to be tight to actually use this data to do something.

**HA:** *Would you do a datathon again?*

**HH:** Absolutely.

**HA:** *What do you think the medical professionals in your team gain from coming here and working with people from your field?*

**HH:** I think a lot of the time they don't have enough of an initial foothold in the data science stuff to understand what we're doing on the data science side, to actually learn from it. But [the benefit] is possibly from understanding how to work with data scientists and talk to them and frame research questions in a common language.

**HA:** *And what do data scientists gain from working with the health professionals?*

**HH:** In the short term, just learning what is a useful problem to work on in the datathon. In the long term, I've learned a lot of new medical terminology and I guess just having an introduction to some of these big data sets is a real handy thing to have.

**HA:** *I know this is a big topic, but what are your thoughts on the potential for AI in healthcare?*

**HH:** That is a big topic [laughs]. On the one hand, it has a huge potential to revolutionise everything. On the other hand, I've read that something like 80 percent of AI applications to healthcare end up not actually working or being deployed, so also there is a huge potential for hype and exercises in frustration. Lots of disappointments, but lots of gains as well.

**HA:** *What has been a highlight for you between the Hack Aotearoa 2020 conference and the datathon?*

**HH:** Leadership growth, really. I've been surprised at how good I've been at organising with my team. From the conference, it's been good getting a wide range of insights into the various different aspects of AI in healthcare and data science in healthcare.