

Meningitis Research Foundation Conference 2025

Provisional Programme

Stay tuned as additional presentations and panel details are confirmed. Please note that all event content is subject to change without prior notice.

Day 1 – Tuesday 18 November

8.15-9.00 Registration, Coffee, Exhibitions and Posters

9.00-9.15 Welcome, Vinny Smith, **Chief Executive Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**

9.15-10.45 **Session 1 (A): The lifetime impact of meningitis – Personal testimony & Meningitis Belt**
Chair: Professor Nora Groce, University College London

This first session of Day 1 will explore the lifetime impact of meningitis through a combination of lived experiences and data-driven country evidence. The session will begin with personal testimonies by those affected by meningitis, followed by presentations examining the evidence for meningitis sequelae, with a focus on regions within the meningitis belt.

- Low income setting personal testimony, **Tendai David Muranganwa, Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**
- High income setting personal testimony, **Isabelle Weall, United Kingdom**

10.45-11.05 Coffee, Exhibitions and Posters

11.05-12.30 **Session 1 (B): The lifetime impact of meningitis – Middle & High Income Settings, Panel Discussion**

This session will build upon Session 1 (A) with further presentations focusing on the evidence for meningitis sequelae in more resource-rich settings. During this session, delegates will be asked to take part in an interactive poll to identify the most important challenges and research priorities. This session will conclude with a panel discussion on challenges to better understanding the lifetime impact of meningitis.

- The development of new immunotherapies for bacterial meningitis starts from understanding brain immunity, **Dr Federico Iovino, Karolinska Institutet**
- Evidence from Brazil, **Dr Paula Reges, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation**

Confirmation of additional panel members:

- **Professor Nora Groce, University College London**
- **Professor Anne Von Gottberg, National Institute for Communicable Diseases**
- **Dr Nicoline Schiess, World Health Organization**

12.30-13.30 Lunch, Exhibition and Posters

13.30-15.00 Session 2 (A): Meningitis: insights into an evolving picture

Chair: Professor Caroline Trotter, University of Cambridge

*This session will delve into emerging patterns in meningitis etiology and epidemiology, including rising pathogens such as *Klebsiella pneumoniae* in neonatal infections, the role of mass gatherings in disease transmission, antimicrobial resistance concerns, and the influence of environmental risk factors on outbreaks.*

- *Klebsiella pneumoniae*: a leading cause of neonatal and childhood meningitis, **Professor Kat Holt, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**
- Update on Umrah- and Middle Eastern/Asian travel-related meningococcal serogroup W invasive disease, **Dr Jay Lucidarme, UK-HSA**
- Associations between environmental risk factors and epidemics, **Molly Cliff, University of Cambridge**

15.00-15.30 Coffee, Exhibitions & Posters

15.30-16.55 Session 2 (B): Meningitis: insights into an evolving picture, Panel Discussion

Chair: Professor Dominique Caugant, Norwegian Institute of Public Health

As the final session of Day 1, this session complements Session 2 (A) by sharing recent data from the United Kingdom, highlighting the latest national picture. It will also present research on meningococcal bacteria carriage among teenagers and young adults, concluding with a panel discussion.

- Latest picture in the UK, **Dr Shamez Ladhani, UK-HSA**
- Meningococcal carriage in freshers following arrival at the University of Nottingham, **Dr Neil Oldfield, University of Nottingham**

Confirmation of additional panel members:

- **Professor Muhamed Kheir Taha, Institut Pasteur Paris**

16.55-17.00 Day 1 Close, Vinny Smith, **Chief Executive Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**

17.00-17.50 Evening drinks reception for all delegates and participants

Day 2 – Wednesday 19 November

9.00-9.05 Welcome to Day 2, Vinny Smith, **Chief Executive Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**

9.05-10.30 Session 3: Advances in meningitis diagnosis and clinical management

Chair: Dr Matthew Coldiron, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

First session of Day 2 will highlight recent progress in clinical approaches to meningitis, with presentations covering advances in diagnostic techniques and updated treatment strategies. This session will explore the introduction of new guidelines on managing serious bacterial infections in infants, followed by a panel discussion.

- Brain Infections Global – a sustainable program to improve the management of brain infections in Africa, Asia and Latin America, **Professor Tom Solomon, CBE, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine**
- Latest developments in clinical management of Tuberculous meningitis, **Dr Fiona Cresswell, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**
- Latest developments in clinical management of Cryptococcal meningitis, **Professor Joe Jarvis, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**

10.30-10.45 Coffee, Exhibitions & Posters

10.45-12.30 Session 4: Mid-point progress of the WHO Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Road Map

Chair: Dr Marie-Pierre Preziosi, World Health Organization

This session will provide a comprehensive update on the WHO Global Roadmap to Defeat Meningitis by 2030, presented by the WHO. During this session, delegate feedback will be collected at the beginning and end of this session through polls, capturing views on progress and research priorities at this important midpoint in the Road Map.

- Global epidemiology overview, **Professor Caroline Trotter, University of Cambridge**
- AFRO Perspective of progress and research priorities, **Dr Andre Bitá, WHO AFRO**
- PAHO Perspective of progress and research priorities, **Dr Nathalie El Omeiri, WHO PAHO**
- EMRO Perspective of progress and research priorities, **Dr Messeret Eshtu Shibeshi, WHO EMRO**

12.30-13.30 Lunch, Exhibitions & Posters

13.30-15.00 Session 5: Strategies for prevention and epidemic control: optimising use of vaccines and developing next-generation solutions

Chair: Dr Brenda Kwambana-Adams, Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust

This session will examine the latest progress and lessons learnt from the roll out of meningitis vaccines and the novel use of DHIS2, drawing on real-world experiences from low-income settings. It will also address results from the Lion MenB trial, explore the implications of Gavi replenishment for meningitis control and examine broader challenges related to vaccine access and equity.

- Latest progress on pneumococcal vaccine usage in children after March SAGE meeting, **Professor Anthony Scott, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**
- How equitable is meningitis vaccine access today? **Professor Nicole Basta, McGill University**

15.00-15.20 Coffee, Exhibitions & Posters

15.20-15.50 Session 6: Poster Presentations and Award

Chair: Dr Kanny Diallo, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS)

This short session will feature oral presentations from the authors of the top five posters selected through the conference abstract call, giving them an opportunity to showcase their research. This session will conclude with the announcement of the best poster award, as chosen by the steering committee.

15.50-16.55 Session 7 Enhancing global meningitis surveillance: current efforts and future directions

Chair: Professor Rob Heyderman, University College London

This final session will showcase the new Meningitis Progress Tracker as a lead-in to ongoing efforts to enhance global meningitis surveillance, featuring talks on the Meningitis Pathogen Genome Value Chain analysis in Nigeria and Chad, the development of new metadata frameworks, and developments in the use of DHIS2.

- Meningitis Pathogen Genome Value Chain analysis in Nigeria and Chad, **Dr Kanny Diallo, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS)**
- Metadata that can be used for sharing meningitis pathogen genome sequences between libraries launch, **Dr Samy Taha, Institut Pasteur Paris**
- Developments in use of DHIS2 for better sequelae surveillance, **Dr Clement Lingani, World Health Organization**
- Meningitis Progress Tracker, **Brian Davies, Meningitis Research Foundation**

16.55-17.00 Closing remarks, Vinny Smith, Chief Executive Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations

We will share more information as the programme develops.

For any questions on the programme please contact Mariusz Kosek, Senior Research and Events Officer, at mariuszk@meningitis.org

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