

Meningitis Research Foundation Conference 2025

Final Programme

Day 1 – Tuesday 18 November

08.15-09.00 Registration, Coffee, Exhibitions and Posters

09.00-09.10 Welcome, Dr Helen Groves, **Director of Research, Meningitis Research Foundation**

09.10-10.30 Session 1 (A): The lifetime impact of meningitis – Personal testimony & data from the Meningitis Belt
Chair: Professor Nora Groce, University College London

This session combines powerful personal testimonies with evidence from low-income settings to illustrate the lifetime impacts of meningitis across neurological, sensory, and psychosocial sequelae, while exploring critical gaps in long-term survivor care and monitoring.

09.15-09.30 Personal testimony, **Tendai David Muranganwa, Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**

09.30-09.45 Personal testimony, **Gemma and Karen Williams, United Kingdom**

09:45-09.50 Launch of interactive survey for audience

9.50-10.05 Sequelae following an epidemic of meningococcal meningitis in Niger, **Dr Matthew Coldiron, Médecins Sans Frontières**

10.05-10.20 Beyond Survival: Early Findings on CSM Sequelae in Nigeria, **Fatima Bukar and Fareedah Munir, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention**

10.25-10.45 Coffee, Exhibitions and Posters

10.45-12.30 Session 1 (B): The lifetime impact of meningitis – Data from Middle & High-Income Settings
Chair: Professor Nora Groce, University College London

Building on the morning session 1 (A), this discussion explores sequelae in higher-resource settings and cutting-edge research on brain immunity.

10.50-11.05 Reprogramming Brain Immunity: Microglial Depletion and NanA-Driven Phagocytosis in Pneumococcal Meningitis, **Dr Federico Iovino, Karolinska Institutet**

11.05-11.20 The Lifetime Impact of Meningitis – Insights from Brazil, **Dr Paula Reges, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation**

11:20-11:35 Evidence from India, **Dr Nethravathi M, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences**

11.35-11.50 Measuring the impact of meningitis, **speaker to be confirmed**

11.50-12.25 Q&A and panel discussion: research priorities on the lifetime impact of meningitis.

Joining as additional panel member: **Professor Anne Von Gottberg, National Institute for Communicable Diseases**

12.30-13.30 Lunch, Exhibition and Posters

13.30-14.55 Session 2 (A): Meningitis: insights into an evolving picture

Chair: Professor Dominique Caugant, Norwegian Institute of Public Health

This session examines emerging trends in meningitis epidemiology and aetiology. Each 15 min presentation will be followed by 5 min audience Q&A.

13.35-13.55 Mass Drug Administration and meningitis, **Professor Samba Sow, CVD-Mali**

13.55-14.15 Update on Umrah- and Middle Eastern/Asian travel-related meningococcal serogroup W invasive disease, **Dr Stephen Clark, UK-HSA**

14.15-14.35 Klebsiella pneumoniae: a leading cause of neonatal and childhood meningitis, **Professor Kat Holt, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**

14.35-14.55 Associations between environmental risk factors and epidemics, **Molly Cliff, University of Cambridge**

15.00-15.25 Coffee, Exhibitions & Posters

15.25-16.55 Session 2 (B): Meningitis: insights into an evolving picture, Panel Discussion

Chair: Professor Dominique Caugant, Norwegian Institute of Public Health

The final afternoon session focuses on the current meningitis landscape and carriage studies in the UK, as well as research priorities for older age groups. It will explore how vaccination strategies and epidemiological shifts inform future prevention efforts. At the end, there will be 10 min for open Q&A from the audience followed by a panel discussion.

15.30-15.45 Meningitis in the UK: now and the future, **Dr Shamez Ladhani, UK-HSA**

15.45-16.00 Evaluating the Effect of Immunisation with Group B Meningococcal Vaccines on Meningococcal Carriage in Adolescents: The Be on the Team Study, **Professor Caroline Trotter, University of Cambridge**

16.00-16.15 Meningococcal carriage in freshers following arrival at the University of Nottingham, **Dr Neil Oldfield, University of Nottingham**

16.15-16.30 Research priorities for meningitis in older age groups, **Professor Muhamed Kheir Taha, Institut Pasteur Paris**

16.30-17.00 Q&A and panel discussion: research questions for understanding the changes in meningococcal disease epidemiology

17.00-17.05 Day 1 Close, Vinny Smith, **Chief Executive, Meningitis Research Foundation and Confederation of Meningitis Organisations**

17.05-17.55 Evening drinks reception for all delegates and participants

Day 2 – Wednesday 19 November

09.00-9.05 Welcome to Day 2, Dr Helen Groves, **Director of Research, Meningitis Research Foundation**

09.05-10.20 Session 3: Advances in meningitis diagnosis and clinical management

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

This session highlights innovations in clinical care.. Speakers will share trial results, treatment updates and strategies to improve outcomes globally, concluding with an interactive panel discussion.

09.10-09.25 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**

09.25-09.40 Latest developments in clinical management of Tuberculous meningitis, **Dr Fiona Cresswell, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**

09.40-09.55 Latest developments in clinical management of Cryptococcal meningitis, **Professor Joe Jarvis, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**

09.55-10.20 Q&A and panel discussion: advances in meningitis diagnosis and clinical management

10.40-12.10 Session 4: Mid-point progress of the WHO Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Road Map

Chair: Dr Marie-Pierre Preziosi, World Health Organization

WHO experts will review progress toward defeating meningitis, highlighting persistent challenges and research priorities needed to accelerate progress in the second half of the decade.

10.45-11.00 Global epidemiology overview, **Professor Caroline Trotter, University of Cambridge**

11.00-11.15 Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Road Map - Mid-point progress review, **Dr Virginia Benassi, World Health Organization**

11.15-11.30 Towards an African Region Free of Meningitis epidemics by 2030: Progress, Challenges and Way forwards, **Dr Andre Bita, WHO AFRO**

11.30-11.45 Progress and country engagement in the Americas, 2021-25, **Dr Nathalie El Omeiri, WHO PAHO**

11.45-12.00 Perspective of progress and research priorities in the Eastern Mediterranean region, **Dr Messeret Eshtu Shibeshi, WHO EMRO**

12.00-12.10 Q&A with the audience

13.00-15.00 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 explores the end-to-end of vaccine research and implementation: from development of new vaccines through to policy, access and use. A panel discussion will explore equity in vaccine access and lessons from real-world use.

13.05-13.20 Looking ahead: meningitis vaccination in Gavi 6.0, **Beth Evans, Gavi Vaccine Alliance**

13.20-13.35 Use of pneumococcal vaccines in children: SAGE policy recommendations 2025, **Professor Anthony Scott, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine**

13.35-13.50 Scheduling infant vaccines for earlier protection: Results from the Lion MenB study, **Dr Natasha Thorn, City St George's, University of London**

13.50-14.05 Vaccine Effectiveness of a Pentavalent Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (Men5CV) in Nigeria, **speaker to be confirmed**

14.05-14.20 Update on GBS vaccine development and serocorrelates, **Dr Konstantinos Karampatsas, City St George's, University of London**

14.20-14.35 How equitable is meningitis vaccine access today? **Professor Nicole Basta, McGill University**

14.35-15.50 Q&A and panel discussion: priorities in improving vaccine access and uptake

15.20-15.50 Session 6: Poster Presentations and Award

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

Oral presentations of the top abstracts selected by the conference Steering Group from submitted posters. The Best Poster Award is judged over the two-day conference based on presentations and discussions in the poster exhibition space.

15.25-15.30 A Comparative Study of individuals with Tuberculous Meningitis by HIV status in a Multi-Country Randomized Trial, **Dr Hanen Smaoui, Children's Hospital of Tunis**

15.30-15.35 Lurking beneath the surface: a hidden reservoir of meningococci amongst anogenital specimens in England, **Dr Helen Campbell, UK-HSA**

15.35-15.40 Low Paediatric Lumbar Puncture Rates: The Need for Sustained and Effective Interventions to Improve Diagnosis, Treatment and Outcomes of Febrile Neurological Presentations, **Dr Constantine Mutata, University of Zimbabwe**

15.40-15.45 The Impact of Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV10) on Pneumococcal Population Structure in Kilifi, Kenya: A Whole Genome Sequencing Analysis, **Eunice Njuguna, KEMRI Wellcome Trust**

15.45-15.50 Award for best poster

15.55-17.10 Session 7 Enhancing global meningitis surveillance: current efforts and future directions

Chair: Professor Rob Heyderman, University College London

The closing session covers advances in tools and frameworks to strengthen global surveillance to support outbreak detection and long-term monitoring.

16.00-16.15 Meningitis Pathogen Genome Value Chain analysis in Nigeria and Chad, **Dr Kanny Diallo, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS)**

16.15-16.30 Establishing Global Standards for Meningitis Metadata to support Genome-Based Surveillance, **Dr Samy Taha, Institut Pasteur Paris**

16.30-16.45 Leveraging DHIS2 Innovations to Strengthen Meningitis Surveillance and Sequelae Monitoring in Africa, **Dr Clement Lingani, World Health Organization**

16.45-17.00 The Meningitis Progress Tracker: Equipping Advocates with Data to Drive Change, **Brian Davies, Meningitis Research Foundation**

17.00-17.10 Q&A with the audience

17.10-17.15 Closing remarks, Dr Helen Groves, Director of Research, **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 mariuszsk@meningitis.org. Stay up to date by signing up to our mailing list: <https://www.meningitis.org/healthcare-professionals/stay-up-to-date>



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