



Canadian Conference on Dementia Hot Topics 2026 | Oct 7, 2026 | Virtual

DETAILED PROGRAM AGENDA

Wednesday October 7, 2026 | 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Eastern (EDT) | Zoom Events

09:00 – 09:45 Event platform opens to attendees to interact with sponsor exhibits.

Zoom Events Exhibition Posters are available for viewing at

<https://events.myconferencesuite.com/CCDHotTopics2026/reg/landing>

PLENARY SESSIONS

09:45 – 9:50

Opening Remarks

Zahinoor Ismail, MD FRCPC – Conference Chair

*Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, Epidemiology, and Pathology, University of Calgary;
Clinician Scientist, Hotchkiss Brain Institute and O'Brien Institute for Public Health*

9:50 – 10:20

Includes 5 minutes for Q & A

Subjective Cognitive Decline and Stage 2 of Alzheimer's Disease

Frank Jessen, MD

*Director of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Cologne; Group Leader for Clinical
Alzheimer Research and Member of the Clinical Executive Board, German Center for
Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE)*

With the evolving causal treatment of AD, early disease detection gains in relevance. Stage 2 of AD refers to the initial symptomatic phase of the disease with subjective and subtle objective cognitive decline. The talk will summarize recent findings on stage 2 with specific focus disease course prediction.

10:20 – 10:30

Transition to Concurrent Sessions

10:30 – 12:00

CONCURRENT SESSIONS: The following four streams will run concurrently from 10:30 – 12:00. Each stream consists of three 30-minute presentations.

STREAM: ALZHEIMER DISEASE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Includes 5 minutes for Q & A

10:30 – 11:00: An Update on Blood Biomarkers for Neurodegenerative Disease and Factors Beyond CNS Pathophysiology that Affect their Interpretation

Joel Simrén, MD, PhD

*Researcher, Department of Psychiatry and Neurochemistry, University of Gothenburg;
Resident Physician in Clinical Chemistry, Sahlgrenska University Hospital*

In this lecture, Dr. Simrén will review the latest advances in blood biomarkers for neurodegenerative diseases, with a focus on biomarkers for AD pathology. He will also discuss factors beyond CSN pathophysiology that are important to be aware of when ordering and interpreting this new class of biochemical tests

11:00 – 11:30: Blood-based Biomarkers in the Clinical Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease

Suzanne Schindler, MD, PhD

*Professor of Neurology, Washington University School of Medicine; Leader of the Fluid
Biomarker Core, Knight Alzheimer Disease Research Center*

This talk will describe the use of blood-based biomarkers in clinical diagnosis of symptomatic Alzheimer's disease. It will include discussion of which blood tests are most accurate, current limitations of blood tests, when a second test should be performed, and how to integrate clinical information and blood test results.



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Objectives:

1. Understand the appropriate clinical use of biomarkers for Alzheimer's Disease.
2. Know that plasma p-tau217 is the most accurate biomarker of amyloid and Alzheimer's Disease pathology.
3. Learn how integrating clinical information and blood-based biomarkers enables accurate clinical diagnosis of symptomatic Alzheimer's disease.

11:30 – 12:00: DMT Real-World Experience

Vijay K. Ramanan, MD, PhD

Associate Professor of Neurology and Director of the Alzheimer's Disease Treatment Clinic, Mayo Clinic; Consultant in the Division of Cognitive/Behavioral Neurology, Department of Neurology, Mayo Clinic

Attendees will learn insights from the early experience of implementing anti-amyloid therapies to real-world clinical practice, including structures for baseline eligibility assessments and longitudinal treatment monitoring as well as areas of active debate and investigation in the field for current and future therapeutic optimization.

STREAM 2: RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT - SCIENTIFIC HIGHLIGHTS IN DEMENTIA RESEARCH

Includes 5 minutes for Q & A

10:30 – 11:00: The cellular phase of Alzheimer's Disease

Bart De Strooper, MD, PhD

Professor (Molecular Medicine), KU Leuven and VIB; Group Leader, UK Dementia Research Institute (UK DRI), University College London and Francis Crick Institute

Alzheimer's disease is widely depicted as a linear cascade from amyloid- β accumulation to Tau pathology and neurodegeneration. We propose instead that the disease unfolds through discrete molecular, cellular and network phases organized around biological inflection points. At these thresholds, stress-driven loss of homeostasis produces qualitative shifts in cellular behavior that alters disease progression. These altered states spread across local tissue-domains, accumulate as a mosaic across the brain, and progressively engage vulnerable centres of information processing that control cognitive performance. The induction of amyloid-associated Tau phosphorylation marks a pivotal inflection point, separating amyloid-dominated tissue states from domains in which neuronal Tau stress responses have emerged. This framework helps reconcile the dissociation between pathology and symptoms, clarifies the shared architecture of familial and sporadic disease and reframes Alzheimer's disease as a disorder shaped by biological thresholds, timing, and progressive erosion of homeostatic resilience.

11:00 – 11:30: Clinical, and Subclinical Cardiac Disease and Risk of Dementia

Michelle Johansen, MD, PhD, FAHA, FANA

Associate Professor of Neurology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

This presentation will examine the expanding body of evidence linking clinical and subclinical cardiac disease—including atrial fibrillation, atrial cardiopathy, and echocardiographic and biomarker-based measures of cardiac dysfunction—to cognitive decline and dementia risk. Drawing on population-based cohort data and mechanistic studies, the talk will address how cardiac pathology may contribute to cognitive impairment through pathways that extend beyond overt clinical stroke, including covert cerebral injury,



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chronic cerebral hypoperfusion, and systemic inflammatory processes. The session will conclude with a discussion of key knowledge gaps and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration across cardiology, neurology, and dementia research to advance prevention strategies.

11:30 – 12:00: New and Notable (7 minutes presentation + 3 minutes Q & A)

Top 3 Abstracts

The top 3 abstracts taken from the Call for Abstracts will have 7 minutes each to present with 3 minutes for Q & A.

STREAM 3: PUBLIC HEALTH & EPIDEMIOLOGY

1030 – 11:00: Hearing and Dementia: From Ears to Brain

Jason Warren, PhD FRACP

Professor of Neurology, University College London; Consultant Neurologist, National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery

Impaired hearing is associated with cognitive decline in dementia, but the basis for this association is not clear. I will present evidence that the auditory brain is targeted early in major neurodegenerative diseases, notably Alzheimer's disease and frontotemporal dementia, leading to disorders of auditory cognition or 'brain hearing'. Auditory cognitive deficits constitute novel candidate markers of neural dysfunction in these dementias and impact hearing and communication in the noisy listening environments of daily life.

11:00 – 11:30: Population Neuroscience and Dementia Syndemics: Using Systems to Address a Global Health Crisis

Ganesh Babulal, PhD OTD MSCI MOT OTR/L

Professor, Mayo Clinic - Rochester

This talk introduces the Population Neuroscience–Dementia Syndemics Framework, which examines how social, political, economic, environmental, and biological factors interact across the life course to shape dementia risk. Attendees will learn how this approach can identify sex- and gender-based inequities, particularly in low- and middle-income countries and guide more representative research, effective prevention strategies, and equitable global health policy.

11:30 – 12:00: Why We Should Care about Mild Behavioural Impairment (MBI)

Constantine (Kostas) G Lyketsos, MD, MHS

Elizabeth Plank Althouse Professor and Chair, Johns Hopkins University; Clinical Core Leader, Johns Hopkins Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC); Founder, Richman Family Precision Medicine Center of Excellence on Alzheimer's Disease

This presentation will provide an overview of the current understanding and management of neuropsychiatric symptoms (NPS) in Alzheimer's disease, highlighting their impact throughout the disease continuum. Participants will explore the concept of neuropsychiatric symptoms emerging before the onset of dementia and the development of the Mild Behavioral Impairment (MBI) construct as a framework for identifying and understanding these early changes. The session will also examine current challenges, emerging research directions, and future opportunities for the study and treatment of MBI, with the goal of improving early detection and intervention strategies in Alzheimer's disease.

12:00 – 13:30 LUNCH, NETWORKING WITH SPONSORS IN THE EXPO, AND POSTER VIEWING



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13:30 – 14:30 **CONCURRENT PARALLEL SESSIONS:** *The following parallel sessions will run concurrently from 1:30 – 2:30 pm. Each session consists of two 30-minute presentations: 25 minutes presentation + 5 minutes Q & A.*

PARALLEL 1: ACROSS THE COGNITIVE CONTINUUM

13:30 – 14:00: How Can AI Chatbots Support Dementia Care?

Ipsit Vahia, MD

Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School; Chief, Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, McLean Hospital

At the end of this talk, attendees will be able to (a) categorize common caregiver questions into algorithmic format (b) recognize how humans enabled with AI tools may be more effective at dementia care (c) understand how AI chatbots can create new efficiencies in care.

14:00 – 14:30: Sleep and Incident Dementia

Kristine Yaffe, MD

Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, and Epidemiology, University of California, San Francisco; Director of the Center for Population Brain Health, University of California, San Francisco

Sleep changes and disturbances are common in older adults. Critically, increasing evidence links sleep quality and sleep disorders to risk of cognitive impairment and dementia, and the field is now beginning to explore the potential for prevention.

PARALLEL 2: BIOMARKER GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13:30 – 14:00: Alzheimer's Association's Guidelines for Blood-based Biomarkers: Where We Are Now and What's Around the Corner

Heather Whitson, MD MHS

Professor of Medicine, Duke University School of Medicine; Co-Director, Duke/UNC Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

This presentation will provide an overview of the Alzheimer's Association's Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG) for the use of blood-based biomarkers in the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. Participants will learn about the key clinical questions addressed to date, current recommendations, and the evolving role of blood-based biomarkers in clinical practice. The session will highlight updates anticipated in the next iteration of the guidelines, including considerations related to commercially available tests and the use of two cut-off approaches to support ruling in or ruling out brain amyloid pathology. In addition, attendees will gain an understanding of pre-test probability and how it influences the interpretation of biomarker results, including positive and negative findings, to support accurate and informed clinical decision-making.

14:00 – 14:30: Canadian Plasma Biomarker Appropriate Use Recommendations

Zahinoor Ismail, MD FRCPC

Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, Epidemiology, and Pathology, University of Calgary; Clinician Scientist, Hotchkiss Brain Institute and O'Brien Institute for Public Health

This presentation will provide an overview of the upcoming Canadian Plasma Biomarker Appropriate Use Recommendations, which is a practical and concept-based document



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intended to help clinicians navigate this rapidly evolving field. We will review biomarker nomenclature and definitions, explore the different platforms and assays, discuss specific use cases, and provide general guidance on how to apply basic principles across different settings.

14:30 – 14:45 BREAK

PLENARY SESSIONS

14:45- 15:45 Plenary Sessions (Includes 10 minutes for Q & A)

14:45-15:15 Future Directions in Alzheimer's Disease/ADRD Research

Heather Snyder, PhD

Senior Vice President, Medical and Scientific Operations, Alzheimer's Association

This presentation will focus on the future directions of research across the entire spectrum of the cognitive continuum. As new studies report out, there is a clear link to cognitive resilience and behavioral change; what are some of the big questions in this research space and what are the studies actively ongoing aimed to address these? This will highlight exciting new research directions focused on brain health and risk reduction. At the same time, the space of therapeutic and diagnostic development continues to expand. New tools and potential avenues for considering diagnostics that span co-pathologies are evolving and gaining a better and deeper understanding. A discussion about this evolving area of research and what this may mean for diagnosis and clinical care will be included. This also ties to therapeutic development, and new avenues for the clinical pipeline in the AD/ADRD space, including combination approaches and how technology is being applied to accelerate therapeutic development.

15:15 – 15:45 The VasCog-2-WSO Criteria for Vascular Cognitive Impairment and Dementia (VCID)

Perminder Sachdev, MD PhD FRANZCP

Scientia Professor of Neuropsychiatry, UNSW Sydney; Co-Director, Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA); Clinical Director, Neuropsychiatric Institute, Prince of Wales Hospital

This talk will provide an overview of the VasCog-2-WSO criteria for diagnosing vascular cognitive disorders, highlighting key updates in clinical, cognitive, and neuroimaging assessment. It will discuss how the criteria can support more consistent diagnosis, improve research comparability, and guide clinical decision-making in patients with cognitive impairment related to cerebrovascular disease.

15:45 – 16:00 Closing Remarks

Zahinoor Ismail, MD FRCPC – Conference Chair

Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, Epidemiology, and Pathology, University of Calgary; Clinician Scientist, Hotchkiss Brain Institute and O'Brien Institute for Public Health

16:00 – 17:00 Poster Viewing

Posters are available for viewing on the conference website at