

International Speakers



Dr. Roger J. Packer, MD, is Senior Vice President of the Center for Neuroscience and Behavioral Medicine, Gilbert Distinguished Professor of Neurofibromatosis, and is Director of both the Gilbert Neurofibromatosis Institute and the Brain Tumor Institute of Children's National Hospital. Dr. Packer's present academic titles include Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics at George Washington University and Clinical Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Dr. Packer is principal investigator (PI) at Children's National for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Consortium (PBTC), formed under the auspices of the National Cancer Institute (NCI); chairman of the PBTC Low-Grade Glioma Committee; site PI for Children's National for the Neurofibromatosis Clinical Trials Consortium; and chair of the Medulloblastoma Committee of the Children's Oncology Group. He has worked closely with the NCI and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and has served on multiple committees setting the directions for neurologic clinical and basic science research for the future. He is co-chair of the Brain Malignancy Committee of the NCI. He has been part of studies evaluating the molecular genetics of childhood and adult neurologic diseases and has coordinated the first gene therapy study for children with malignant brain tumors in the U.S. The majority of the studies now being coordinated by Dr. Packer are studies evaluating innovative agents aimed at the molecular underpinnings of neurologic disease. He has published over 400 original articles and 350 reviews and chapters.



Dr Eric Bouffet MD is a Professor of Paediatrics in the University of Toronto, Garron Family Chair in Childhood Cancer Research and Head of the Neuro-oncology Section in the Division of Haematology/Oncology at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Toronto. Dr Bouffet was co-Chairman of the Brain Tumour Committee of the International Society of Pediatric Oncology (SIOP) and served as a President of SIOP from 2016-2019. He is currently Chair of the Canadian Paediatric Brain Tumour Consortium. He is also a member of the steering committee of the brain tumour committee of the Children's Oncology Group. Dr Bouffet is a Senior Associate Scientist in the Research Institute at the Hospital for SickKids. His research interests are in the area of novel treatments and clinical trials in children with brain tumours. He is author or co-author of over 500 peer-reviewed manuscripts and author/co-author on numerous book chapters in the field of neuro-oncology. He was the recipient of several awards, including the Alvin Zipursky Teaching Award, the Claus Wirsig Humanitarian Award, and the Richard Rowe Award for Clinical Excellence in Paediatric Medical Care. In 2020, He was elected Member of the Board of Directors of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).



Dr. Mark Kieran, MD, PhD, is Clinical Trial Lead, Pediatrics Program, Oncology Clinical Development, Bristol-Myers Squibb. He received his first PhD in 1983 from the University of Alberta and his MD in 1986 from the University of Calgary. After a post-doc in molecular biology in Paris, and pediatric residency at McGill University in Montreal, he completed a second post-doc in signal transduction at Children’s Hospital Boston. Dr. Kieran became Director of Pediatric Medical Neuro-Oncology at Dana-Farber Boston Children’s Cancer and Blood Disorders Center in 1999. Dr. Kieran’s primary research interest was the genomic identification of mutations and development of new targeted therapies for children with brain tumors. He has a particular focus on tumors of glial origin and the identification of the biology that leads to their growth. His laboratory focused on the immune microenvironment of tumors while the clinical program centered on the initiation of early phase trials for brain tumors based on the improved understanding of their biology and incorporation of personalized approaches such as targeted therapies, biologic therapies, immune therapy and gene therapy.



Dr. Simon Bailey, MBChB PhD FRCPCH is a Professor of Neuro–Oncology and a consultant paediatric oncologist based at the Great North Children’s Hospital and University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He is head of the Paediatric Oncology Department at the Great North Children Hospital. His research interests include molecular biomarkers in medulloblastoma, diffuse intrinsic pontine gliomas and delivery of risk adapted protocols to resource challenged countries. He is the European lead for high risk medulloblastoma and the chair of the NCRI brain tumor group and UK CCLG Embryonal tumor group.



Dr. Ahmed Naqvi, MBBS, MRCP, is a pediatric oncologist currently working at SickKids Toronto. He graduated from Dow Medical College Karachi. Prior to joining SickKids, Dr. Naqvi worked as a consultant Paediatric Haematologist and Oncologist and an Associate Professor at The Aga Khan University (AKU) in Karachi, Pakistan. He was instrumental in developing pediatric hematology and oncology service at AKU and one of the founding members of the Pakistan Society of Pediatric Oncology (PSPO). Dr. Naqvi is a member of the Leukemia and Lymphoma section in the division of hematology and Oncology at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) Toronto. His areas of special interest are Juvenile Myelomonocytic leukemia and Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis. He is a co-director of the Histiocytosis program.



Dr. Vijay Ramaswamy MD, FRCPC, PHD, is originally from Northern Alberta, where he completed medical school and a paediatric neurology residency at the University of Alberta (MD '05, FRCPC '10). Following that he completed a paediatric neuro-oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, after which he came to Toronto where he completed a PhD in Cancer Genomics at the University of Toronto (PhD '15) and a clinical neuro-oncology fellowship at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). He is currently a staff neuro-oncologist in the Paediatric Brain Tumour Program at SickKids, and Assistant Professor in the Departments of Medical Biophysics and Paediatrics at the University of Toronto. He has over 170 peer reviewed publications. His research interests primarily involve translational genomics of both medulloblastoma and ependymoma with a specific interest in recurrent and high-risk tumours.



Dr Nisreen Amayiri is a pediatric neuro-oncologist at King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) in Jordan. She finished her Higher Specialization in Pediatrics from the Jordan University of Science & Technology in 2006 and then completed her fellowship in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at KHCC. She was appointed immediately there as in charge of the pediatric neuro-oncology service. With enthusiasm and determination, she received two awards from Conquer Cancer Foundation /ASCO; IDEA in 2015 and LIFe in 2016. The latter enabled her to advance her knowledge and experience through a year of formal pediatric neuro-oncology fellowship training at the Hospital for Sick Children /Toronto. Dr Amayiri has several publications about outcome of children with CNS tumors at KHCC. Her main clinical interest is how to improve the quality of life of children with CNS tumors in a resource limited country.



Dr Huirong Mai is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Deputy Director, Hematology and Oncology Department at Shenzhen Children's Hospital, Guangdong Province, China. She is a Member, International Society of Pediatric Oncology and Member, Precision Therapy for Childhood Cancer Committee of Chinese Biomedical Engineering Society Member, Pediatric Oncology Committee of Guangdong Anti-Cancer Association



Dr. Ata Ur Rehman Maaz MBBS, FRCPCH, MRCPCH, CCT is a graduate of Rawalpindi Medical University. He has dual accreditation (CCT) in Pediatrics and Pediatric Oncology from PMETB UK. He is the former head of Pediatric Oncology service at Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Center, Lahore, where he developed the first Pediatric Neuro-Oncology MDT in Pakistan. He was a Consultant Pediatric Neuro-Oncologist at Noah's Ark Children's Hospital for Wales, Cardiff for a number of years before moving to his current position at Sidra Medicine, where he is the program director for Neuro-Oncology. He is also the lead for the survivorship program at Sidra Medicine. He is currently engaged in clinical research in epidemiology of brain tumors and factors affecting the delay of diagnosis in pediatric brain tumors in Qatar.



Dr. Raja B. Khan, MD, MRCP, graduated from King Edward Medical College in Lahore, Pakistan. He trained in internal medicine and neurology followed by further training in neuro-oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York. He was Faculty at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN from 2001 to 2006, Faculty at University of Tennessee and Semmes-Murphey Clinic from 2006 to 2012, and Member (Professor) of neurology and Director of neurology at St. Jude Children's research Hospital, Memphis, TN since 2012. Dr. Khan's research focus is on neurologic complications of childhood cancer and its treatment, their long-term outcome in patients and survivors, and amelioration of these complications. He has more than 70 peer reviewed publications and book chapters. He has Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians, UK; USA board certification in Neurology and Neuro-Oncology; and was awarded Fellowship of the American Academy of Neurology in 2016.



Dr. David Malkin, MD, FRCP(C), FAAP is a Professor of Pediatrics and Medical Biophysics in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto. He holds the CIBC Children's Foundation Chair in Child Health Research, is a Senior Staff Oncologist in the Division of Hematology/Oncology, Director of the Cancer Genetics program, and a Senior Scientist in the Genetics and Genome Biology Program at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Dr. Malkin is the Lead of the SickKids Precision Child Health initiative. He is co-Director of the SickKids Cancer Sequencing (KiCS) program which integrates and translates next generation sequencing into clinical care of children with cancer, and Director of the pan-Canadian multi-institutional PReCISION Oncology For Young peopLE (PROFYLE) initiative which is establishing a pipeline to incorporate next generation sequencing into novel clinical trials ('precision oncology') for children and young adults with hard-to-treat cancers across Canada. Dr. Malkin's research program focuses on genetic and genomic mechanisms of childhood cancer susceptibility which he has explored particularly in the context of TP53 and Li-Fraumeni syndrome. Recently, his work has addressed the application of genomics to develop rational clinical surveillance and treatment guidelines for children and adults at genetic 'high risk' for cancer. He has published over 250 peer-reviewed articles and has received several awards recognizing his dedication to clinical care, advocacy, research, medical education and mentorship. His research has been funded by the Terry Fox Research Institute, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Institutes for Health Research, Canada Foundation for Innovation, Genome Canada, the National Institutes of Health (US) and the Department of Defense (US).



Dr. James Drake, FRCSC, is a Professor of Surgery, Division Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada and holds the Harold Hoffman Shoppers Drug Mart Chair. He is a senior associate scientist at Sickkids Research Institute, leads the Centre of Image Guided Innovation and Therapeutic Intervention (CIGITI) and is co-lead of the Centre of Excellence in image guided care. He is also co-director of the Centre of Mathematical Medicine at the Fields Institute, University of Toronto. Dr. Drake's primary research and clinical interests relate to engineering applications to neurosurgery including hydrocephalus, image guided surgery and robotics. Dr. Drake has over 230 peer-reviewed publications, holds major grants from CIHR/NSERC.



Dr. Peter Dirks MD, PhD, FRCSC, is a Pediatric neurosurgeon and senior scientist at the Hospital for Sick Children and Professor of Surgery at the University of Toronto. He co-leads OICR's Brain Cancer Translational Research Initiative. Dr. Dirks' clinical interests lie with the entire spectrum of pediatric neurosurgical practice, with emphasis on the surgical treatment of childhood brain tumours and brain vascular malformations. In addition, he is interested in brain tumour heterogeneity and how the diverse cell types that comprise these tumours contribute to tumour maintenance and therapeutic resistance.



Dr. Abilash Haridas is a neurosurgeon in Tampa, FL. He received his medical degree from PSG Institute of Medical Sciences and has been in practice 16 years. He specializes in cerebrovascular neurosurgery, pediatric neurosurgery, and skull base and is experienced in skull base surgery, pediatric neurosurgery, cerebrovascular disease, neurosurgical trauma and critical care, and epilepsy surgery.



Dr. David J. Daniels, MD, PhD, is a pediatric neurosurgeon at the Mayo Clinic, who specializes in pediatric brain tumors. He has worked extensively in understanding the biology and improving outcomes of diffuse intrinsic pontine gliomas (DIPG) in children. His other area of interest are high grade gliomas.



Dr. Zubair Tahir, MBBS FCPS FEBNS, FRCS, is a consultant neurosurgeon at Great Ormond Street hospital (GOSH), and honorary Associate Professor at the UCL Institute of Child Health, London, UK. He has special interest and expertise in complex congenital and acquired spinal pathologies in children and surgery for refractory epilepsy. He is part of complex epilepsy surgery team at GOSH. He leads the postgraduate education in neurosurgery at GOSH. He sits on consultant advisory appointment committee to represent Royal College of Surgeons (RCS).



Dr. Arnold Paulino is a Professor of Radiation Oncology and Director of Pediatric Radiation Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He has been treating children with cancer for about 25 years and is the author of approximately 200 peer reviewed papers and 45 book chapters. He is the course director of the Annual MD Anderson Pediatric Radiation Oncology Course given to about 50 Texas radiation oncology residents. Together with Dr. Anita Mahajan, he is the editor of the textbook, Radiation Oncology for Pediatric CNS tumors. He is one of the senior radiation oncologists in the Renal Tumors Committee of the Children's Oncology Group, a fellow of both the American College of Radiology and American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) and has been invited multiple times as an oral board examiner for CNS and Pediatric tumors for the American Board of Radiology Radiation Oncology Initial certification. He is also the incoming General Secretary of the Pediatric Radiation Oncology Society.



Dr Jeannette Parkes is Professor and Head of the division of Clinical and Radiation Oncology, and Head of department Radiation Medicine at Grootte Schuur Hospital and the University of Cape Town in South Africa.. She is clinical director of the Access to Care (Cape Town) programme, which is a collaboration between UCT, CPUT and Varian Medical systems, designed to teach practical radiotherapy to teams of professionals from Africa. She is on the executive committee of the Paediatric Radiation Oncology Society (PROS), and is Team leader of SIOP's PODC (Paediatric Oncology in developing countries) radiotherapy working group. She is the radiotherapy representative on SIOP Africa's executive committee, as well as SNOSSA (Society of neuro-oncology in Sub-Saharan Africa) and is teaching faculty for the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology's (ESTRO) Paediatric RT in LMIC as well as on the ESMO (European society of medical oncology) teaching faculty for central nervous system tumours.



Dr. Laurence Eckel, MD, PhD, is chair of Mayo Clinic Neuroradiology in Rochester, Minnesota, a group of 50 neuroradiologists dedicated to outstanding patient care, education, and research. He is the former chair of the neuroradiology clinical practice committee. In 2018, he was the first radiology consultant in over five years to receive a Karis Award in recognition of his service to clinicians and patients. In addition, he is currently the president of the American Society of Pediatric Neuroradiology.



Dr. Cynthia Hawkins, MD, PhD, FRCPC, is a neuropathologist and scientist at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. She is a Senior scientist at the SickKids Research Institute and a Professor of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology at The University of Toronto. Dr. Hawkins' clinical practice includes both surgical and autopsy pediatric neuropathology. She is best known for her expertise in pediatric brain tumours and has a research lab devoted to pediatric astrocytoma. Her research interests include molecular pathogenesis and therapeutics for pediatric glioma and clinical implementation of novel diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic markers for pediatric brain tumours. She has more than 500 publications to her credit.



Dr. Arie Perry, MD, is a Professor of Pathology and Neurological Surgery and is the director of Neuropathology at University of California, San Francisco. Perry's research focuses on improving classification and grading schemes as well as the identification of molecular genetic markers associated with tumorigenesis, malignant progression, and/or biologic behavior. He played a leading role in setting the agreed-upon diagnostic guidelines for benign and malignant nervous system tumors published by the World Health Organization. He has won numerous teaching awards and authored various publications, including the textbook "Practical Surgical Neuropathology". He has more than 500 publications to his credit.



Dr. Joanne Wolfe, MD, MPH, is the Chief of the Division of Pediatric Palliative Care in the Department of Psychosocial Oncology and Palliative Care at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (DFCI) and the Director of Palliative Care at Boston Children's Hospital (BCH). She is also a Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. In addition to providing clinical pediatric palliative care, Dr. Wolfe directs a research program focusing on easing suffering and promoting wellbeing in seriously ill children and their families and co-directs the Pediatric Palliative Care Research Network. Dr. Wolfe has served as the immediate past president for the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.



Karen Williams, FNP-BC, ACHPN, is a Clinical manager, Education Coordinator of the Division of Quality of Life and Palliative Care, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN. Karen has spent more than 15 years of her 20 years in the medical field caring for children who are not likely to survive their illness and their families. Her focus in caring for these precious ones and their families is to make every day the **BEST DAY POSSIBLE!!** She has worked very diligently to learn her craft, attaining her advanced certification in hospice and palliative medicine as well as earning a post graduate certificate in pediatric bioethics.



Dr TV Ajithkumar is a Consultant Clinical Oncologist at Cambridge University Hospitals, Cambridge, UK. His research interest is to optimize the combination of radiotherapy with novel agents in paediatric brain tumours and hepato-pancreatico-biliary tumours to improve clinical outcome. He is the Chair of the European Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOPE) Brain Tumour Radiotherapy group and is the principal investigator for the international Paediatric Normal Tissue Effects in the Clinic (PENTEC) Re-irradiation working group. He is the lead editor Specialist training in Oncology (Elsevier), Oxford Desk Reference in Oncology, and Oxford Case histories in Oncology. He is also a co-editor of the Imaging in Clinical Oncology (Oxford) and the lead author of the upcoming textbook, Oxford Specialist Handbook in Oncology: Radiotherapy planning.

National Speakers



Dr Syed Ahmer Hamid a Dow graduate of 1995, Did his fellowship from college of physicians and surgeon Pakistan in Padiatrics in 2004. He completed his second fellow ship in Padiatric Hematology and oncology from Children Cancer Hospital (CCH) in 2010 under the mentor ship of Dr Muhammad Shamvil Ashraf, since then working as a consultant Padiatric Oncologist and after CCH merger with Indus Hospital in 2014 continued working as a senior consultant Padiatric Oncology. He is a supervisor and examiner of college of physician and surgeons Pakistan (CPSP). Currently he is heading as Chair Padiatric services at Indus Hospital. His specific areas of interest and expertise is Padiatric Neuro oncology and Retinoblastoma in children.



Dr Najma Shaheen Graduated from Nishtar medical college, Did FCPS in Paediatrics in 2008 Completed Hematology /oncology fellowship from Shakut khanum cancer hospital in 2012. Worked at Bristol Royal children hospital UK, Great Ormond street hospital, London and Birmingham children hospital UK from Jan 2015- Sep 2017. Currently working as Head of departmnet of paediatric oncology at Shaukat Khanum Cancer Hospital, Lahore.



Dr. Uzma Imam is currently working as Chief Oncologist of Child Aid Association and Department In charge Pediatric Oncology at National Institute of Child health, Karachi. Her areas of special interest are Lymphomas, Retinoblastoma, Brain tumors and Research. Her mission statement is: "service of the collective, is the highest utilization of the force of life".



Dr Shazia Riaz MBBS, MD, graduated from Fatima Jinnah Medical University. She did her pediatric residency at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, and Pediatric Hematology Oncology fellowship at Virginia Common Wealth University. She joined Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital and Research Center and was Head of Pediatric Hematology Oncology department. Currently she is head of pediatric Hematology Oncology at Doctor's Hospital and is also consultant Hematologist Oncologist at The Children Hospital Lahore. Her special interests are Brain tumors and AML. She is instrumental in starting Pediatric Neuro-oncology services at CHL.



Dr Fatima Mustansir is a graduate of the Aga Khan University's (AKU) MBBS Class of 2019. She is presently working as Teaching Associate in the Department of Biological and Biomedical Sciences at AKU. Fatima has been involved in research at AKU'S Department of Neurosurgery for several years. Her research interests include neurooncology and neuroendoscopy.