Managing multiple sclerosis during the **COVID-19 pandemic**

Thursday **30 April 2020** | **19:00–21:00** BST | **14:00–16:00** EDT | **20:00–22:00** CEST

Gavin Giovannoni

Chair of Neurology, Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, UK

Gavin Giovannoni was awarded a PhD in immunology from the University of London in 1998. He was appointed as a clinical senior lecturer at the Royal Free and University College Medical School in 1998 and moved back to Queen Square in 1999. He was made a Reader in Neuroimmunology in 2004.

His research is focused on Epstein–Barr virus as a possible cause of MS, MS-related neurodegeneration, biomarker discovery, MS clinical outcome measures, MS clinical trials and immune tolerance strategies.

Marco Salvetti

Professor and Chair of Neurology at Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

Professor Salvetti was awarded the Rita Levi-Montalcini award for research on MS in 1999. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Italian Multiple Sclerosis Society and member of the Scientific Steering Committee of the International Progressive Multiple Sclerosis Alliance. He coordinates the Neuroimmunology Study Group of the Italian Society of Neurology,

His interests include the investigation of gene–environment interactions in the aetiology of MS. His contributions in this field include new approaches to the analysis of genome-wide association studies, the proposal of a mechanistic model for the aetiology and clinical course of MS, and analyses of Epstein–Barr virus genotypes associated with MS.

Tony Cunningham

Founding Director of the Westmead Institute for Medical Research and Director of the Commonwealth-funded Australian Centre for HIV and Hepatitis Virology Research, Australia

Professor Cunningham is a clinician scientist trained in infectious diseases, clinical virology and virology research. He has advised State and Commonwealth governments on viral diseases and biosecurity (especially HIV) and is an established consultant on vaccines in aging populations and for shingles and herpes.

He is currently researching the development of vaccines in the aging population (including COVID-19) and for herpes simplex virus using human tissue models. He continues to be involved in the analysis of pivotal shingles vaccine trials as well as continuing with his research in HIV and herpes virus biology and immunology.

Tomas Kalincik

Associate Professor and Head, Clinical Outcomes Research Unit, University of Melbourne, Australia and Head of the MS and Neuroimmunology Service, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Australia

Professor Kalincik specializes in the analytics of observational data in neurology and is an active participant in the global MSBase network. He has led a number of international collaborative research initiatives, including studies of comparative treatment effectiveness, management of treatment failure and individual treatment response.

His main interests span treatment outcomes in MS and other neuroimmunological diseases, individualized therapy, prognostics (including emerging biomarkers), causal inference, epidemiology and the utility of volumetric MRI.

Eva Havrdová

Professor of Neurology at the First Faculty of Medicine, General University Hospital, Charles University in Prague and Director of the Center for Demyelinating Diseases at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Professor Havrdová obtained her medical degree at Charles University in 1981, and went on to specialize in neurology and became Professor in 2010. She is a member of the MSIF International Medical and Scientific Board and a member of the Czech Neurological Society Committee. She introduced DMT for the management of MS in Czech Republic and established a network of MS centres covering the country. She organized the ECTRIMS Congress in Prague in 2007 and developed the Standards of Diagnostics and Treatment of MS and NMO in the Czech Republic.

Her research interests include cytokine, immunoglobulin and T-cell research in MS and the treatment of malignant MS. She developed the concept of 'freedom from disease activity' that is now used to compare the efficacy of MS drugs.

Anneke van der Walt

Associate Professor, Department of Neuroscience, Central Clinical School, Monash University, and Head of MS and Neuro-ophthalmology at Alfred Health, Melbourne, Australia

Professor van der Walt's research interests include digital biomarkers and applied technology, real-world data, MS cognition and cerebellar function. She has a keen interest in women's health in MS as well as symptom management in people with MS.

Liesbet Peeters

Chair of the MS Data Alliance Initiative, and Data Scientist at the Biomedical Research Institute and the Data Science Institute of Hasselt University, Belgium

Dr Peeters is a member of the ELIXIR community, which is focusing on constructing a sustainable infrastructure for the sharing of biological information throughout Europe. She is a core group member of #DataSavesLives.

Her research focuses on developing big data sharing procedures and artificial intelligence algorithms with a specific focus on real-world evidence.

Bernadette Porter MBE

CEO and Founder, NeuroResponse CIC Honorary Consultant, UCLH NHS Foundation Trust and the Royal Free Foundation Trust, UK

Ms Bernadette Porter is the Founder and CEO of NeuroResponse, a digital care model that gives people living with neurological conditions more control over the care they receive. She is an alumnus of the NHS Innovation Accelerator Programme and a current NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Fellow and has received many awards including an MBE for services to nursing, the inaugural HSJ top 50 NHS Innovators List in 2013 and an Ehealth award for the UK in 2014.

She has published widely and has a track record of successfully and collaboratively challenging multidisciplinary teams to deliver patient-focused care. She is actively involved in service design and patient-focused research agendas.

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