

# Real-life responses to COVID-19 and MS

Wednesday 2 September 2020

19:00–20:30 BST | 14:00–15:30 EDT | 20:00–21:30 CEST



## Gavin Giovannoni

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

Professor Gavin Giovannoni is Chair of Neurology, Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, UK. He 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

**Sapienza University of Rome, Italy**

Professor Salvetti is Professor and Chair of Neurology at Sapienza University of Rome, Italy. 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. Professor Salvetti's research 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. Professor Salvetti was awarded the Rita Levi-Montalcini award for research on MS in 1999.



## Danny Altmann

**Imperial College London, UK**

Professor Altmann is Professor of Immunology at Imperial College London, UK. His key research interests are the immunology of infectious disease including severe bacterial infections, Zika virus, SARS-CoV-2 and Chikungunya virus. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he

has acted in several advisory roles, including the House of Commons and House of Lords Science Committees and the Immunology Task Force to SAGE. Other projects focus on autoimmune disease, including MS T cell studies, the role of the microbiota in rheumatoid arthritis and autoimmune immunotoxicity in cancer immunotherapy. He has been a key figure in building the NIH Immune Epitope Database, an open-access database of pathogen epitopes. He spent several years working on strategy in infection, immunity and population health at the Wellcome Trust, and is a trustee of the MRC Medical Research Foundation and a BBSRC panel member. He had acted as editor at several immunology journals over the past 20 years.



## Maria Pia Sormani

**University of Genoa, Italy**

Dr Sormani is Professor of Biostatistics at the University of Genoa, Italy, where she currently teaches biostatistics and research methods to medical students. After receiving her Masters in Biostatistics at the University of Milan, Italy, and her Masters in Biophysics at the University of Pisa,

Italy, she collaborated for more than 10 years with the Neuroimaging Research Unit at San Raffaele Hospital in Milan. Dr Sormani serves on the national MS society clinical trials advisory committee and is a member of the editorial boards for the *Multiple Sclerosis Journal* and *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders*. She is also an *ad hoc* reviewer several titles including *Lancet Neurology*, *Brain* and *Neurology*. She has published more than 400 papers in peer-reviewed journals.



## Bassem Yamout

**American University of Beirut Medical Center, Lebanon**

Dr Yamout is Professor of Neurology at the American University of Beirut Medical Center, Lebanon, and Head of Clinical Research at the Multiple Sclerosis Centre. After training in neurology at the University of Cincinnati, USA, he began a fellowship at the Montreal Neurological

Institute–McGill University, Canada. Dr Yamout is the current President of MENACTRIMS (Middle East North Africa Committee for Treatment Research in Multiple Sclerosis) and is currently the Principal Investigator on several international MS trials. He is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, and is a member of multiple regional and international advisory boards for MS. Dr Yamout is currently Chief Editor of *MS Today*, and a member of the editorial boards of *Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders* and *Journal of Multiple Sclerosis*. He has published more than 90 papers in peer-reviewed journals.



## Kerstin Hellwig

**St. Josef Hospital / Ruhr University, Germany**

Dr Hellwig is a senior consultant and MS specialist in the Department of Neurology, St. Josef Hospital/Ruhr University, Germany. Dr Hellwig holds a postdoctoral lecture qualification in 'Special therapeutic aspects in patients with multiple sclerosis'. Dr Hellwig trained in

epidemiology at the Department of Preventive Medicine at University of Southern California, USA, and under the mentorship of Dr Annette Langer Gould at the Research Department of Kaiser Permanente, USA. Her research interests lie in the field of MS and family planning. Since 2006, Dr Hellwig has established and maintained a nationwide MS and pregnancy registry in Germany with more than 1500 prospectively collected pregnancies of women with MS.



## Julia Pakpoor

**University of Oxford, UK**

Dr Pakpoor is a National Institute for Health Research Academic Clinical Fellow in Public Health at the University of Oxford, UK. An ex-BMJ Clegg scholar, her research – and resulting publication record – is focused on using population-based data to explore risk

factors for MS, such as alcohol misuse, gout and obesity, as well as the burden of neurodegenerative diseases on the health service. Dr Pakpoor is a member of the *triMS.online* Scientific Steering Committee, who are responsible for designing and selecting key topics for our virtual programmes and events.



## Ruth Stross

**Surrey Downs Health and Care, UK**

Ruth Stross is a clinical nurse specialist in neurology at Surrey Downs Health and Care, UK. Since qualifying as a nurse almost 30 years ago, she has gained further specialist expertise in neurology, motor neurone disease, Parkinson's and MS. Working in the NHS and with

not-for-profit organisations, Ruth is skilled in setting up and managing new specialist nursing services and has successfully secured funding for a variety of nursing posts and charities. Ruth also has experience of working with commissioning organisations and experienced in healthcare management.

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*triMS.online* would like to acknowledge Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany for providing an independent medical education grant for this *triMSx* event

