



18th World Congress of Biological Psychiatry & 5th Global Congress of Biological Psychiatry
Joint Meeting | 27–30 August 2026 | Jaipur, India

Confirmed Invited Speakers (subject to change)

Plenary Sessions



**Brain Dimensions of Depression:
From Biomarkers to Home-Based Neuromodulation**
Prof. Cynthia Fu
*Department of Psychology and Human Development
University of East London, United Kingdom*



**The Bipolar Action Network:
A Collaborative Organization to Improve Outcomes**
Andrew A. Nierenberg, MD
*Dauten Family Center for Bipolar Treatment Innovation
at Massachusetts General Hospital, USA*



Development and application of biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease
Dr. Pedro Rosa-Neto
*Department of Neurology, UT Southwestern Medical Center
Dallas, United States*



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Debates

Are GLP-1 receptor agonists the new frontier in the treatment of psychiatric disorders?



Proponent: *Prof. Dan Siskind*
*University of Queensland, Faculty of Health,
Medicine and Behavioural Science, Brisbane, Australia*



Opponent: *Prof. Andreas Reif*
*Department of Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy,
University Medical Centre Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany*

Cannabis use in adolescence negatively impacts emerging adults' neurodevelopmental and cognitive abilities



Proponent: *Prof. Robin Murray*
*Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience,
King's College, London, United Kingdom*



Opponent: *Dr. Debasish Basu*
*Department of Psychiatry, Postgraduate Institute of Medical
Education & Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, India*

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Immuno-metabolic depression: Is it prime time to adopt immuno-metabolic modulating pharmacological and lifestyle interventions?

Proponent: Prof. Jane A. Foster
Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care, Division of General Psychiatry, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, United States



Opponent: Prof. Gin S. Malhi
Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom

State-of-the-Art Sessions



**Advances in Psychosis:
Real Advances and Chimeras Over the Past Half-Century**
Prof. Robin Murray
Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College, London, United Kingdom



**Cognitive neuroscience of antidepressant action –
what's new and why does it matter?**
Prof. Catherine Harmer
Department People & Culture, University of Oxford, Warneford Hospital, Oxford, United Kingdom

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Medication strategies for managing difficult-to-treat depression in young people: Absence of evidence or evidence of absence?

Christopher G. Davey

Department of Psychiatry, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Presidential Symposium

**Beyond DSM-5: What Comes Next – and
'Why It Matters' or 'The Future of Diagnosis: Inside the Next DSM'**



Dr. Nitin Goghtay

*Division of Research, Deputy Medical Director,
American Psychiatric Association, Bethesda, United States*



Prof. Anissa Abi-Dargham

*Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, Stony Brook Medicine,
New York, United States*

Special Session Speakers

**Neurodevelopmental origins of mental illness:
Data from Indian longitudinal studies**

Prof. Vivek Benegal

Senior Professor of Psychiatry (Retd)

Former Head, Departments of Psychiatry Centre for Addiction Medicine

*Department of Psychosocial Support in Disaster Management National Institute
of Mental Health and Neurosciences Bengaluru, India*



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Presenter Bios

Anissa Abi-Dargham, MD, is Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, Lourie Endowed Chair in Psychiatry, SUNY Distinguished Professor, and Associate Dean for Clinical and Translational Science at Stony Brook University's Renaissance School of Medicine. Dr Abi-Dargham was born in Beirut, Lebanon, where she obtained her medical degree. She did residency training in Psychiatry at the University of TN in Memphis followed by two research fellowships, at NIMH then Yale University. Dr. Abi-Dargham is an expert in the areas of molecular imaging, pharmacology, schizophrenia and addiction. She is an internationally recognized leader in the use of molecular imaging of the human brain to study schizophrenia and its comorbidity with addiction. Her research has resulted in seminal findings describing the complex alterations of dopamine transmission in schizophrenia and the relationship to clinical symptoms, cognition and response to treatment. She has recently focused on modulators of dopamine such as the cholinergic system and the kappa opioid system, using PET to uncover specific relationships between targets and symptom domains. In recognition for her work, she received the Leiber Prize for outstanding research in schizophrenia from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, she was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2016 and served as President of the American College for Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) in 2017. She is a Special Lecturer at Columbia University in New York, where she spent the last twenty-two years of her career prior to her move to Stony Brook University in 2016. She directs the Multi Modal Translational Imaging Lab at Stony Brook and oversees a multidisciplinary team with expertise in multiple neuroimaging modalities used in tandem to address important questions about the brain mechanisms of schizophrenia. She is also currently chairing the APA DSM subcommittee on candidate biomarkers and biological factors.

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Dr. Debasish Basu is former Professor and Head, Department of Psychiatry, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh, India, where he was involved in psychiatric service, teaching, research and administration for more than three decades. He has been as a NIDA-INVEST Fellow at Yale University, USA, and later as a Consultant Psychiatrist in the Mersey Care NHS Trust, Southport, England and NHS Lothian, Livingston, Scotland. His areas of interest include general adult psychiatry, addiction psychiatry, social psychiatry, and public mental health. He has received several distinctions and honors at national and international levels, including International Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, Honorary Fellow of the World Association of Social Psychiatry, and President of the Indian Association for Social Psychiatry. He is the Founding Editor of *World Social Psychiatry*, the official journal of the World Association of Social Psychiatry. He has more than 400 scholarly publications to his credit, including books, several book chapters, and articles published in national and international journals.

Dr. Vivek Benegal, Senior Professor of Psychiatry (Retired) at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore (India), trained as a psychiatrist and specialised in the area of Addiction Medicine. He is currently Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Kasturba Medical College, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal (India). His area of clinical expertise is in treatment interventions for adolescents and young adults with common vulnerability to brain and behaviour disorders including Addictive disorders, Adult Attention Deficit Disorder and youngsters exposed to developmental stress and adversity. Over the last 30 years, he has explored the trajectories of brain development across the human lifespan (fetal stage through to senescence) associated with vulnerability / resilience to brain illness and the factors which impact these brain growth curves. This includes the study of mechanisms through which exposure to environmental influences across the lifespan- (maternal stress, childhood adversities, infections, pollution, nutrition and social-economic disparity) modify the individual's genetic programming, to sculpt the brain and shape the person's psychological and neurological abilities to engage with their environmental challenges.

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He also co-leads the National Mental Health Surveys of India, studying the prevalence and incidence of mental disorders and on the use of and need for services by the mentally ill in India, and constitute the largest household surveys of mental health internationally. He has led numerous epidemiological studies on the extent and patterns of substance use in India, its impact on public health and social cost, and harms to others.

Professor Christopher Davey MBBS(Hons) MPsychiatry PhD, FRANZCP

Chris Davey is the Cato Chair and Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Melbourne and a consultant psychiatrist at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. His main clinical and research interest is in the management of severe mood disorders. He has led large multicentre clinical trials examining psychotherapy, antidepressant medications, anti-inflammatory agents, and ketamine for depression. He is also interested in using neuroimaging to understand the brain mechanisms that underlie depression and social-affective processes.

Chris completed his medical degree at the University of Western Australia and trained in psychiatry in Sydney and Melbourne before completing his PhD at the University of Melbourne. He previously worked for many years at Orygen, Australia's leading clinical and research centre for youth mental health, and served as editor-in-chief of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry.

Jane A. Foster, PhD, is a Professor of Psychiatry at the Center of Depression Research and Clinical Care (CDRC) in the Department of Psychiatry, and O'Donnell Brain Institute, at UT Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, TX. As a neuroscientist and a leading expert on the microbiome, Dr. Foster's research aims to connect the dots between a person's 30 trillion gut microbes and their propensity for mental illness. Her research program in biomarker discovery combines basic science research with clinical collaboration in psychiatry, psychology, gastroenterology, microbiology, immunology, and bioinformatics. Dr. Foster's research takes a 'bench to bedside' and back again approach to studying microbiota-brain and immune-brain systems. This collaborative approach and the ability to independently conceptualize cutting-edge neurobiological

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research in both normal states and psychiatric disorders has resulted in the development of an internationally recognized research program. A focus of ongoing research is the development of analytical methods to integrate microbiome data with neuroimaging, behavioural, and clinical data sets in order to better understand the individual nature of microbiome-host interactions in health and disease. These analytical approaches will be utilized to advance the discovery of robust clinically tractable biomarkers of health status, treatment response and other clinical features

Cynthia Fu, MD PhD, is Professor of Affective Neuroscience and Psychotherapy at the Centre for Affective Disorders, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, and University of East London, and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist, National Affective Disorders Service, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Her research focuses on identifying neuroimaging-based biomarkers to improve classification in mood disorders and to predict treatment response at the individual level. She co-leads the COORDINATE-MDD consortium, an international collaboration which is developing AI-driven approaches to identify brain-based dimensions of depression and predictors of treatment response. Her work also aims to translate mechanistic insights into innovative treatments. She leads clinical trials of neuromodulation therapies, including NIHR-funded home-based transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS), to develop scalable and personalised interventions for mood disorders. Through this work, she seeks to advance precision psychiatry by linking brain-based biomarkers with targeted treatments for depression. Her research funding has included NIMH, NARSAD Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, UK Medical Research Council, Milken Institute, Rose-trees Trust, Wellcome Trust, and International Psychoanalytical Association.



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Nitin Gogtay, MD, is a psychiatrist and neuroscientist whose work has shaped contemporary understanding of brain development and severe mental illness. Trained in pathology and neuropathology at BJ Medical College in India, he pursued neuroscience research at the Karolinska Institute, the University of Sydney, and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke before completing psychiatry residency at Cornell. At the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Dr. Gogtay led landmark longitudinal neuroimaging studies of typical brain maturation and childhood-onset schizophrenia. His work helped establish a neurodevelopmental framework for psychotic disorders, identifying deviations in cortical maturation that inform our understanding of early-onset illness and long-term outcomes. He also contributed to treatment guidelines for youth with psychosis and served as an ad hoc FDA advisor on pediatric therapeutics. He later founded and directed the NIMH Office of Clinical Research, overseeing the Institute's clinical trials portfolio and strengthening integration across translational and clinical research. Dr. Gogtay currently serves as Vice President of Research and Deputy Medical Director at the American Psychiatric Association. He oversees DSM development and leads the Psych-PRO registry, a national mental health registry designed to generate high-quality longitudinal clinical data to advance quality improvement and real-world evidence. His current work focuses on strengthening the scientific foundations of psychiatric diagnosis by integrating developmental neuroscience, functional outcomes, and population-level data, efforts that contribute to national and international discussions on the future architecture of psychiatric classification and mental health policy.

Catherine Harmer is Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oxford. Her research focuses on understanding the cognitive mechanisms through which antidepressant treatments exert their effects, bringing together approaches from pharmacology, experimental psychology and neuroscience. In particular, her work has examined how antidepressants influence emotional processing, offering new insights into how these treatments may begin to work before changes in mood are subjectively

<https://www.wfsbp-congress.org/>



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experienced. She is currently President of the British Association for Psychopharmacology and a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences. Her research has contributed to a shift in how antidepressant action is conceptualised, with the aim of guiding the development of more effective and targeted treatments for depression and related disorders. Her work is supported by major funders including the Wellcome Trust and the National Institute for Health Research (UK).

Professor Gin Singh Malhi, BSC(Hons) MBChB(Manc) MSt(Oxf) MD(UNSW) FRCPsych FRANZCP, is the Department Head of Academic Psychiatry at Northern Clinical School, which is within the Faculty of Medicine and Health at The University of Sydney, in Australia. He is a Visiting Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, and after serving as the Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Neuropsychiatrica* and then *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry (ANZJP)* he has been the Editor-in-Chief of *Bipolar Disorders* and now *The British Journal of Psychiatry*. He is also the College Editor for the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK) and has served as the President of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders (2020-2023). His research expertise is in the phenomenology and ontology of mood disorders and suicide and their pharmacotherapy as well as the development of clinical practice guidelines. Over his career he has published nearly a thousand articles including books and book chapters, and his work has regularly appeared in top tier journals such as *The Lancet*. He has an h-index of over 110 and he is an ISI-recognised highly cited researcher. Throughout his career he has won awards for his research endeavours as well as his teaching and mentorship and is a sought-after speaker.

Sir Robin Murray is Professor of Psychiatric Research at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience. He was one of the first to suggest that schizophrenia was in part a neurodevelopmental disorder, and he and his colleagues have contributed to the understanding that environmental factors such as obstetric events, drug abuse and social adversity dysregulate striatal dopamine and thus increase the risk of psychosis. He also cares for people with



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psychosis at the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. He has written over 1,000 articles, not all of them boring! He is the most frequently cited psychosis researcher outside the USA, has supervised 83 PhDs and 13 MD Theses, and 52 of his students have become full professors. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2010 and received a knighthood in 2011.

Andrew A. Nierenberg, MD is the Director of the Dauten Family Center for Bipolar Treatment Innovation at Massachusetts General Hospital, holds the Thomas P. Hackett, MD Endowed Chair at MGH, and is a Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. In addition to directing the Dauten Center, Dr. Nierenberg serves as the co-director of the MassGeneralBrigham Center for Clinical Research Education in the Office of Clinical Research. Dr. Nierenberg earned his MD from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He did his residency at NYU/Bellevue Hospital and then his fellowship as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Yale. After working at McLean Hospital, he then went to Massachusetts General Hospital where he has been since 1992. Dr. Nierenberg focuses on clinical trials for bipolar disorder and depression, with over 630 published papers and a Google Scholar h-index of over 130. He has been listed among The Best or Top Doctors in America for the treatment of mood and anxiety disorders yearly since 1994. He has been honored with the International Society for Bipolar Disorders Mogens Schou Award for Research, the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation's Colvin Prize, and the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Scientific Research Award. He leads the Bipolar Action Network, a Learning Health Network comprising multiple health-care systems, which breaks down the barriers between clinical, research, and quality improvement activities to achieve better outcomes. Dr. Nierenberg has an active clinical practice, supervises and teaches residents, serves on multiple nonprofit advocacy boards, is a member of multiple journal editorial boards, and is the editor-in-chief of *Psychiatric Annals*.



**18th World Congress of Biological Psychiatry & 5th Global Congress of Biological Psychiatry
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Prof. Dr. Andreas Reif is a German Psychiatrist, who received his training at the University Hospital Würzburg, where he also did his residency and later on became Vice Chair of the Department of Psychiatry. In 2014, he took over the position of the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy at the University Medical Center Frankfurt, where he is also full professor of psychiatry. AR's clinical and research interests encompass affective disorders (TRD, bipolar disorder, suicidality), aggression and adult ADHD; his research is translational in nature and revolves around the ideas of precision psychiatry, i.e. identifying the best therapy at the exact time for a given individual patient. He has published more than 700 original papers and reviews, also in the most prestigious journals such as the New England Journal of Medicine, Lancet and Science, and has an h^2 index ca. 110. Collaborative research efforts where he has a leading role include the Collaborative Research Center on the Neurobiology of Aggression (TRR SFB 379) and the LOEWE Centre DYNAMIC, the latter focusing on conceptualizing mental disorders as a disturbance of dynamic networks on several levels from neurobiology to psychopathology. He is an internationally renowned speaker and active in several learned societies, especially the German Psychiatric Association (DGPPN), where he is an executive board member since 2017, as well as ECNP, where he is President since 2025 (Presidency 2025-2028). Also, he is involved in several clinical guidelines (e.g. depression, ADHD, suicide prevention) and outreach programs.

Pedro Rosa-Neto, MD, PhD, is a neurologist, clinician-scientist, and Full Professor in the Department of Neurology at the UT Southwestern Medical Center, where he holds the Dorothy L. and John P. Harbin Distinguished Chair in Alzheimer's Disease Research. He is Director of the Translational Neuroimaging Laboratory and Acting Director of the North Texas Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (NT-ADRC). Prior to joining UT Southwestern, Dr. Rosa-Neto served as Director of the Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit and Director of the McGill Centre for Studies in Aging at McGill University. His research focuses on the development and application of imaging and fluid biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease and related neurodegenerative disorders, with particular emphasis on

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**18th World Congress of Biological Psychiatry & 5th Global Congress of Biological Psychiatry
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neuroinflammation, molecular PET imaging, and translational biomarker validation. Dr. Rosa-Neto has authored more than 400 peer-reviewed publications and is internationally recognized for his contributions to the understanding of amyloid, tau, and glial biomarkers across the Alzheimer's disease continuum. His work has contributed to the validation of PET and plasma biomarkers for early detection, disease staging, and therapeutic trial applications. He has led several international collaborative initiatives, including the TRIAD cohort, and has played an active role in advancing harmonization and standardization efforts in biomarker research.

Prof. Dan Siskind MBBS, MPH, PhD, FRANZCP trained as a psychiatrist in Australia and the United States. He works clinically as a psychiatrist in Brisbane, Australia, with people with treatment refractory schizophrenia. His research interests include treatment refractory schizophrenia, clozapine and the physical health comorbidities associated with schizophrenia. He has over 300 publications and AU\$ 60million in competitive research grants, with over AU\$7 million as CIA.

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