



GLOBAL VIRTUAL  
STREPTOCOCCUS RESEARCH  
SYMPOSIUM  
APRIL 27-28, 2026 | ONLINE



**IRC**  
Impact Research Communications

# Global Virtual Conference on **Streptococcus** Research Symposium

April 27–28, 2026 | Virtual

Time zone: 9 AM Eastern Time (USA)

**Final Program**

## Supporting Sponsors



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08:50-09:00 Zoom Joining & Opening Remarks

## Session - I

**Session Chair:** Alexander J. Keeley, LSHTM, United Kingdom

**09:00-09:40** **Francis J Castellino, PhD**, University of Notre Dame, IN, USA  
Molecular Crosstalk Between the Host and Pathogen in Group A Streptococcal Infections

**09:40-10:10** **Madeleine W Cunningham, PhD**, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, OK, USA  
Autoimmune Mechanisms in Group A Streptococcal Sequelae: Rheumatic Fever, PANDAS and Beyond

**10:10-10:40** **Debra E. Bessen, PhD**, New York Medical College, NY, USA  
The Hunt for Correlates of Protection: Changes Over Time in Strep A-Specific IgG Among School-Aged Children

**10:40-11:10** **Giuseppe Teti, MD**, Scylla Biotech S.r.l., Italy  
Innate Immunity Thought by Streptococci

**11:10-11:40** **Caroline Weight, PhD**, Lancaster University, United Kingdom  
Respiratory Epithelial Activation of Innate Immunity Following *Streptococcus pneumoniae* Infection

**11:40-12:00** Short Break

## Session - II

**Session Chair:** Caroline Weight, PhD, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

**12:00-12:30** **Nikolai Siemens, PhD**, University of Greifswald, Germany  
Immune Responses to *Streptococcus pyogenes* - Interplay Between Host Defense and Pathogen Evasion

**12:30-13:00** **H. Alexandra Shaw, PhD**, NIBSC, United Kingdom  
A Standardised Serum for Strep A: Why, What and How?

**13:00-13:30** **Christopher LaRock, PhD**, Emory University School of Medicine, GA, USA  
Innate Immune Sensing of *Streptococcal proteases*

**13:30-14:00** **Alexander J. Keeley, PhD**, LSHTM, United Kingdom  
The Role of M-type Specific Antibody Responses in the Evolution of Protective Immunity to *Streptococcus pyogenes*?

**14:00-14:20** Short Break

## Session - III

**Session Chair:** Caroline Weight, PhD, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

**14:20 - 14:50** **Rebecca Flaherty, PhD**, Aquinas College, MA, USA  
Macrophage Cell Death and Inflammatory Signaling Responses to Group B Streptococcus

**14:50–15:20** **Samuel Shelburne, MD, PhD**, University of Texas–MD Anderson Cancer Center, TX, USA  
New Insights Into How the CovRS System Impacts GAS Pathophysiology

**15:20–15:50** **Guangchun Bai, MD, PhD**, Albany Medical College, OK, USA  
Cyclic Di-AMP in the Pneumococcus: From Virulence to Competence Program

### Day 1 Closing Remarks

# DAY-2

Tuesday, April 28, 2026  
Eastern Time (USA)

**08:50–09:00** Zoom Joining & Opening Remarks

## Session - IV

**Session Chair:** **Pratyush Madapuji Ravi**, Carnegie Mellon University, PA, USA

**09:00–09:30** **Timothy Barnett, PhD**, The Kids Research Institute, Australia  
New Insights into Group A Streptococcus Relapse Infections

**09:30–10:00** **Justin Zik, PhD**, National University of Singapore, Singapore  
Dual Transposon Sequencing Profiles the Genetic Interaction Landscape in Bacteria

**10:00–10:30** **Sven Hammerschmidt, PhD**, University of Greifswald, Germany  
Cross-talk of Pneumococci with the Host at the Border of Colonization and Invasive Disease

**10:30–11:00** **Shaynoor Dramsi, PhD**, Pasteur Institute, France  
Interaction of a *Streptococcus gallolyticus* with Human Colonic Mucus Layer

**11:00–11:20** Short Break

## Session - V

**Session Chair:** **Andrew Fenton, PhD**, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

**11:20–11:50** **Marcus Fulde, PhD**, The Free University of Berlin, Germany  
*Streptococcus canis* at the Crossroads: Host–Pathogen Interactions and Epidemiological Dynamics

**11:50–12:20** **Diana Pohlman**, Pandas Network, CA, USA  
Building a Repository to Understand the Genetic Susceptibility for PANDAS and Sydenham Chorea

**12:20–12:50** **Pratyush Madapuji Ravi**, Carnegie Mellon University, PA, USA  
Bringing Biofilms into Focus: Identifying Genes Controlling the *S. pneumoniae* Biofilm Lifecycle Using a High-Throughput Imaging Assay

**12:50–13:10** Short Break

## Session - VI

- 13:10–13:40** **Eileen M Dunne, PhD**, Pfizer, NY, USA  
*Streptococcus pneumoniae*: Serotype Epidemiology and Real-World Evaluation of Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccines
- 13:40–14:10** **Andrew Fenton, PhD**, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom  
Overcoming Penicillin Resistance in *S. pneumoniae*
- 14:10–14:40** **Laia Pasquina Lemonche, PhD**, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom  
AFM Imaging reveals the nanometric damage made by antibiotics to the *Streptococcus pneumoniae* cell wall
- 14:40–15:10** **Slawomir Lukomski**, West Virginia University, WV, USA  
Invasive emm92-type Group A Streptococcal Infections: MLSB Resistance and Alternative Antimicrobial Development
- 15:10–15:40** **Saugata Majumder**, Albany Medical College, NY, USA  
Spiking Lung-Resident Memory Immunity with Intranasal Unadjuvanted PspA Following Parenteral Pneumococcal Vaccination Protects Against Respiratory *Streptococcus pneumoniae* Infection
- 15:40–16:10** **Stephanie S. Momeni, PhD**, Oregon Health and Science University, OR, USA  
Advancing Perspectives of Clinical *Streptococcus Mutans* in Early Childhood Dental Caries

16:10

Closing remarks

Organized by



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