



unfolding PANS PANDAS

reshaping **BRAIN+BODY** health

Canadian Conference
may 29-30, 2025 | calgary, ab

This program was developed by the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and Education, Hotchkiss Brain Institute, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary and co-developed by the Inflamed Brain Alliance, and was planned to achieve scientific integrity, objectivity, and balance.

Best Western Premier Calgary Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY



THE MATHISON CENTRE
for MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH & EDUCATION



HOTCHKISS
BRAIN INSTITUTE



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alliance



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Unfolding PANS PANDAS: Reshaping BRAIN+BODY Health is Canada's inaugural national PANS PANDAS conference, that brings together nationally and internationally recognized experts to explore the physiological and psychological complexities of Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS) and Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS).

The conference primarily targets child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrists, as well as other health care professionals. While designed with physicians in mind, it also warmly welcomes patients, families, educators, therapists, researchers, and allied health professionals.

Through expertly curated presentations and discussions, the conference will address critical gaps in understanding, diagnosis, and treatment. The goal is to enhance patient outcomes and provide meaningful support to those impacted by these often misunderstood disorders.



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THE MATHISON CENTRE
for MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH & EDUCATION



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Thursday, May 29, 2025 - Agenda

All times listed in MST

7:30 – 8:30 am	Registration & Breakfast	Session Duration: 45 minute presentation + 15 minute Q&A
8:30 – 9:00 am	Welcome & Introductions *unaccredited	
9:00 – 10:00 am	Understanding PANS/PANDAS: Diagnostic Criteria, Evaluation, and Treatment Strategies Susan Swedo, MD Keynote Speaker	p.4
10:00 – 11:00 am	Beyond Basics: Exploring 'Outside-the-Box' Treatment Add-Ons for PANS/PANDAS Wendy Edwards, MD, FRCPC	p.4
11:00 – 11:15 am	Break	
11:15 am – 12:15 pm	Beyond Strep: Diagnosing and Treating PANS Triggers Ayla Wilson, ND	p.5
12:15 – 1:15 pm	Lunch Break	
1:15 – 2:15 pm	Understanding and Supporting Students with PANS/PANDAS: A Collaborative Approach Nina Gudeon, MD, FRCPC	p.5
2:15 – 3:15 pm	PANS/PANDAS: The Evolution of a Disease Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPCHR	p.6
3:15 – 3:30 pm	Break	
3:30 – 4:30 pm	PANS/PANDAS in Children and Adolescents Presenting to a Regional Health Center and the Importance of Medical Collaboration Alexa Bagnell, MD, FRCPC	p.6
5:30 – 6:30 pm	Networking Dinner	
6:30 – 7:30 pm	Parent Roundtable (30 mins) & Speaker Roundtable (30 mins) Facilitator: Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPCHR Parent Panel: Heather Macdonald, Kelly Van Seters, Leanne Park, Tracy Shaban Speaker Panel: Ayla Wilson, ND, Nina Gudeon, MD, FRCPC, Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd	p.7
7:30 – 8:30 pm	Origami Crane Folding Activity & Networking *unaccredited	

Friday, May 30, 2025 - Agenda

All times listed in MST

7:30 – 8:30 am	Breakfast	Session Duration: 45 minute presentation + 15 minute Q&A
8:30 – 9:30 am	PANS/PANDAS: Low Grade Inflammation and Subsequent Development of Arthritis and Autoimmune Disease Jennifer Frankovich, MD, MS	p.8
9:30 – 10:30 am	The Interaction of Genetic and Environmental Factors in Development of Neuropsychiatric Disorders in Children: Implications for PANS Paul Arnold, MD, PhD, FRCPC	p.8
10:30 – 10:45 am	Break	
10:45 – 11:45 am	Practical Applications of Hypnosis and Neurolinguistic Programming to Treat Severe OCD and Anxiety in Children with PANS and PANDAS Scott Antoine, DO, FACEP, ABOIM, IFMCP *virtual presentation for all*	p.9
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch	
12:30 – 1:30 pm	Transforming Care for PANS/PANDAS: Shifting Mindsets, Strengthening Support, and Sparking Change Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd	p.9
1:30 – 2:30 pm	Exploring the Gut-Brain Connection: Advances in Microbiome Research and Therapeutic Innovations for OCD and PANS/PANDAS Valerie Taylor, MD, PhD, FRCPC, ICD.D	p.10
2:30 – 2:45 pm	Break	
2:45 – 3:45 pm	Strengthening Physician Support & Advancing PANS/PANDAS Care Panel: Susan Swedo, Wendy Edwards, Tim Ubhi, Alexa Bagnell, Jennifer Frankovich, Paul Arnold, Valerie Taylor Moderator: Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd	p.10
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Closing & Group Photo *unaccredited	



7:30 – 8:30 am MST | Registration & Breakfast

8:30 – 9:00 am MST | Welcoming & Opening Remarks *unaccredited

9:00 – 10:00 am MST



Understanding PANS/PANDAS: Diagnostic Criteria, Evaluation, and Treatment Strategies

Susan Swedo, MD (Keynote Speaker)

Former Chief of Pediatrics & Developmental Neuroscience at the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH); retired from NIMH; Scientist Emeritus at the National Institutes of Health (NIH); pioneering researcher who coined the concepts of PANDAS and PANS

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the five criteria for the PANDAS subgroup and distinguish these patients from others with childhood-onset obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) through real-life examples.
- Explain the relationship between PANS and PANDAS, and describe the diagnostic criteria for PANS.
- List diagnostic tests useful for evaluating acute-onset OCD and summarize treatment guidelines for PANS/PANDAS, including access to online resources for case management.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Swedo is a renowned board-certified pediatrician who earned her M.D. from Southern Illinois University and completed her residency at Northwestern University, where she also served as Chief of Adolescent Medicine. Joining the NIMH Child Psychiatry Branch in 1986, Dr. Swedo's team made groundbreaking discoveries, identifying a post-infectious cause of OCD and defining the PANDAS subgroup. She later served as Associate Director for Pediatric Research and Director of the Division of Pediatric Translational Research, leading efforts to diagnose and treat childhood neuropsychiatric disorders, including Sydenham's chorea, Tourette Syndrome, OCD, and autism spectrum disorders. With over 200 research publications, Dr. Swedo's work has profoundly advanced pediatric neuroscience, leaving a transformative legacy in the field.

Dr. Swedo has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

10:00 – 11:00 am MST



Beyond Basics: Exploring 'Outside-the-Box' Treatment Add-Ons for PANS/PANDAS

Wendy Edwards, MD, FRCPC

Consultant Pediatrician and pioneer in PANS/PANDAS treatment in Ontario since 2011; recently semi-retired and former Chief of Pediatrics at Chatham-Kent Health Alliance

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify key findings in a patient's medical history suggesting gastrointestinal yeast dysbiosis, understand its impact on PANS/PANDAS treatments, and explore treatment strategies for addressing yeast dysbiosis.
- Recognize signs of an overactive histamine reaction in a patient's history, understand its effects on PANS/PANDAS, and discuss treatment options to manage histamine responses.
- Explain the role of adequate Vitamin D levels in supporting immune function and maintaining a balanced neuropsychiatric environment in PANS/PANDAS patients.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Wendy Edwards is a now, semi-retired consultant paediatrician, working in Chatham-Kent for the last 27 years. She worked as a paediatric nurse for eight years in Toronto before returning to medical school at McMaster University where she received her medical degree in 1993, followed by a residency in Pediatrics in Toronto at the Hospital for Sick Children where she was chosen to act as the chief resident in her final year. Dr. Edwards was the first pediatrician to recognize and treat PANS/PANDAS in Ontario. She has been working in "the trenches" treating these patients since 2011. She continues to work with her own PANS/PANDAS long term patients and offers assistance to family doctors and pediatricians who are wanting to treat patients with these conditions, over the OTN eConsult service.

Dr. Edwards has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



11:00 – 11:15 am MST | Break

11:15 am – 12:15 pm MST



Beyond Strep: Diagnosing and Treating PANS Triggers

Ayla Wilson, ND

Naturopathic Doctor and founder of High Five Family Health in Vancouver, BC, with over 14 years of experience specializing in treating pediatric neuroinflammatory conditions, including PANS/PANDAS

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify PANS diagnostic criteria and differentiate between key symptoms of a diverse group of PANS triggers.
- Develop a deeper understanding of varying causes of infectious vs. noninfectious triggered autoimmune encephalitis.
- Explain the core principles of PANS treatment for well-rounded case management and improved patient outcomes.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Ayla Wilson is a Naturopathic Doctor practising under the College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC and the College of Naturopaths of Ontario at High Five Family Health in Vancouver, BC. With over 14 years of experience treating patients with PANS/PANDAS, autoimmune encephalitis, Autism Spectrum Disorders and ADHD, she has guided thousands of families through these difficult diagnoses. Dr. Wilson's passion is helping children with complex needs and supporting their families in understanding and navigating these conditions. Dr. Wilson's treatment strategy is solutions-focused, by identifying and treating underlying causes of paediatric neuroinflammatory conditions and implementing accessible and evidence based medical treatments.

Dr. Wilson has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

12:15 – 1:15 pm MST | Lunch Break

1:15 – 2:15 pm MST



Understanding and Supporting Students with PANS/PANDAS: A Collaborative Approach

Nina Gudeon, MD, FRCPC

Pediatric psychiatrist and founder of Calgary's Village Health & Wellness, specializing in PANS/PANDAS, advancing neuropsychiatric care through clinical practice and education

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify key indicators of PANS/PANDAS by understanding its medical, cognitive, and behavioral impacts on students.
- Foster collaboration by exploring strategies for educators, physicians, and mental health professionals to support early diagnosis and care.
- Apply effective school accommodations by implementing IEPs, flexible schedules, and mental health supports to aid student success.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Nina Gudeon earned her BA from Cornell University in 1997, her MD from Memorial University of Newfoundland in 2002, and is a Clinical Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and a Clinical Lecturer at the University of Calgary Cumming School of Medicine. As the founder of Village Health & Wellness, a community pediatric psychiatry clinic in Calgary, Alberta, Dr. Gudeon specializes in the care of children and families affected by complex neuropsychiatric conditions, including PANS/PANDAS. She is dedicated to advancing understanding, diagnosis, and treatment through her clinical work and education efforts. Dr. Gudeon also teaches medical students, residents, and allied health professionals, equipping them with the tools to provide compassionate, informed care. Her work is shaping future healthcare providers and improving outcomes for patients with these challenging conditions.

Dr. Gudeon has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



2:15 – 3:15 pm MST



PANS/PANDAS: The Evolution of a Disease

Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPC

Consultant Pediatrician in London, England specializing in PANS/PANDAS, leading groundbreaking research, treating 1,400+ patients, and founding Europe's first PANS clinic and the Children's e-Hospital

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Trace the historical evolution of tic disorders, from the foundational work of Sir William Osler and Charcot to current understanding and clinical practices.
- Examine international collaborative research and the UK experience, including the development of the London PANS Clinic, political challenges, and advancements in guidelines and treatment protocols.
- Evaluate clinical presentations of PANS/PANDAS across different age groups, phenotype variations, and findings from EMG and pupillometry research at the London PANS Clinic.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Tim Ubhi, Consultant Paediatrician and Fellow of the Royal College of Paediatrics & Child Health, has over 30 years of experience in Paediatrics. A founding member of the UK PANS/PANDAS Physicians Network, he specializes in PANS and PANDAS and serves on national guideline committees and the Scientific and Medical Advisory Board of EXPAND. He completed award-winning research on botulinum toxin for cerebral palsy and held an MRC fellowship developing treatments for children's cancers. Dr. Ubhi has treated over 1,400 PANS/PANDAS patients and is an NHS leadership graduate. In 2015, he founded the Children's e-Hospital, rated "Outstanding" by the CQC. In 2024, he opened The London PANS Clinic, Europe's first center dedicated to treating and researching PANS/PANDAS.

Dr. Ubhi has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

3:15 – 3:30 pm MST | Break

3:30 – 4:30 pm MST



PANS PANDAS in Children and Adolescents Presenting to a Regional Health Center and the Importance of Medical Collaboration

Alexa Bagnell, MD, FRCPC

Chief of Psychiatry at IWK Health and Professor & Head, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss PANS PANDAS presentations utilizing a case based approach.
- Review an approach to assessment, investigation and intervention for these cases that requires collaboration among pediatric subspecialties to promote positive outcomes.
- Examine the outcomes of a retrospective cohort study of probable PANS cases in terms of the clinical benefit of the use of high dose intravenous immunoglobulin to target symptoms of neuroimmune inflammatory presentations.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Alexa Bagnell is the Chief of Psychiatry at IWK Health and Professor & Head, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She completed medical training at Dalhousie University and post graduate training at Harvard University, returning home to start her career at IWK in 2003. She is co-founder of the treatment of anxiety group (TAG) program at IWK Health in 2005, and in 2013, established the first obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) clinic in Eastern Canada at the IWK to provide evidence-based treatment and consultation services for Halifax and Maritime youth with OCD. Through her work with the OCD clinic, she has established collaborations with other medical specialties to support investigation, diagnosis and treatment of PANS PANDAS in children and youth.

Dr. Bagnell has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

4:30 – 5:30 pm MST | Break



5:30 – 6:30 pm MST | Networking Dinner

6:30 – 7:30 pm MST



Parent Roundtable & Speaker Roundtable

Moderator: Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPCH

Parent Roundtable: The Power of Advocacy – Perspectives from Parents

- Heather Macdonald - H. Macdonald has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Kelly Van Seters - K. Van Seters has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Leanne Park - L. Park has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Tracy Shaban - T. Shaban has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Roundtable: Advancing PANS PANDAS Care – Integrative Clinical and Educational Perspectives

- Ayla Wilson, ND - Dr. Wilson has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Nina Gudeon, MD, FRCP - Dr. Gudeon has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd - S. Gauch has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the challenges families face in accessing appropriate care and develop strategies to overcome these obstacles.
- Develop effective communication and coordination among healthcare professionals, educators, and community members to improve diagnosis, treatment, and support for patients.
- Describe the role of educational settings in supporting students with PANS/PANDAS and collaborate with healthcare professionals to optimize student outcomes.

We have a special opportunity to hear from two vital groups in the PANS PANDAS community—parent advocates and expert speakers. These discussions will give us valuable insight into the lived experiences of families and the challenges in clinical care, and educational support. This is a chance to listen, reflect, and collaborate on ways to drive meaningful change.

In the first half, we'll hear from four dedicated parent advocates who will each share their personal journey in advocacy. Then, we'll break into table discussions to reflect on what we've heard, followed by a brief sharing of key takeaways. In the second half, we'll shift to a roundtable with three expert speakers, who will offer insights into integrative care and a collaborative approach in educational settings. Again, we'll follow with table discussions and a group share.

7:30 – 8:30 pm MST | Origami Crane Folding Activity & Networking *unaccredited



Origami Crane Folding Activity *unaccredited

As part of the evening's Networking Dinner, we invite attendees to take part in a meaningful Crane Folding Activity from 7:30–8:30 PM. This hands-on experience will offer a moment of reflection on the importance of community, collaboration, and support for patients and families affected by PANS PANDAS.

Origami cranes symbolize hope, healing, and resilience—qualities that define the journey of those navigating these complex conditions. Guided by instructors, participants will learn how to fold a crane, each fold representing the shared efforts needed to advance understanding, improve care, and create lasting change.

Just as each crease and fold contributes to the shape of the crane, every voice and action within the medical and advocacy communities plays a role in strengthening the path forward. This activity serves as a visual reminder that no family should face this journey alone and that progress is only possible when we work together.

Join us in folding cranes as a symbol of unity, support, and our collective commitment to unfolding a better future for those impacted by PANS PANDAS.



8:30 – 9:30 am MST



PANS PANDAS: Low Grade Inflammation and Subsequent Development of Arthritis and Autoimmune Disease

Jennifer Frankovich, MD, MS

Clinical Professor, Pediatrics – Allergy, Immunology, Rheumatology; Co-Director, Stanford Children's Immune Behavioral Health Clinic; Director, Stanford Immune Behavioral Health Research Program, Stanford University School of Medicine

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify common inflammatory signs observed in children with PANS PANDAS.
- Describe arthritis and other autoimmune conditions associated with PANS PANDAS.
- Develop and implement effective management strategies for inflammation and autoimmune conditions in children with PANS PANDAS.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Jennifer Frankovich specializes in Pediatric Rheumatology and is renowned for advancing diagnostic approaches and treatments for pediatric autoimmune and autoinflammatory conditions. In 2012, she co-founded the Stanford Immune Behavioral Health (IBH) Multi-Disciplinary Clinic, providing care for Bay Area patients while leading a research program focused on the intersection of immunology and neuropsychiatric disorders. Her work advances understanding of post-infectious psychiatric conditions like Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS). Dr. Frankovich established a biorepository distributing over 4,700 specimens to collaborators, fueling research breakthroughs. Combining clinical expertise with translational research, she collaborates across disciplines to uncover PANS's immunological underpinnings and improve care strategies for children worldwide.

Dr. Frankovich has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

9:30 – 10:30 am MST



The Interaction of Genetic and Environmental Factors in Development of Neuropsychiatric Disorders in Children: Implications for PANS

Paul Arnold, MD, PhD, FRCPC

Director, Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research & Education; Professor, Departments of Psychiatry and Medical Genetics, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain how genetic and environmental factors interact to influence the development of childhood-onset neuropsychiatric disorders, including implications for PANS.
- Identify key genetic factors that impact brain structure and function in children with PANS and other neuropsychiatric conditions.
- Discuss how environmental risk factors may contribute to the onset or progression of PANS in genetically predisposed children.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Paul Arnold is the Director of the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research & Education, and a Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Medical Genetics at the Cumming School of Medicine at the University of Calgary. Dr. Arnold is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist with particular expertise in pediatric obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). His research focuses on how genetic and environmental risk factors interact to influence the development of childhood-onset neuropsychiatric disorders. He also studies genetic influences on brain structure and function in children with mental illnesses, working to advance diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for these conditions.

Dr. Arnold has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

10:30 – 10:45 pm MST | Break



10:45 – 11:45 am MST



Practical Applications of Hypnosis and Neurolinguistic Programming to Treat Severe OCD and Anxiety in Children with PANS and PANDAS

Scott Antoine, DO, FACEP, ABOIM, IFMCP

Co-Founder and Lead Physician at The Center for Fully Functional Health in Carmel, Indiana; author of The Comprehensive Physicians' Guide to the Management of PANS and PANDAS

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the common presentations of OCD and anxiety in children with PANS and PANDAS and explain their biochemical basis.
- Assess the roles of behavioral therapies and the subconscious mind in managing OCD, anxiety, and behavioral regulation.
- Apply practical techniques from hypnosis and NLP to support pediatric patients with OCD and/or anxiety, regardless of the etiology.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Scott Antoine holds board certifications in Emergency Medicine (ABEM) and Integrative Medicine (ABOIM). He is also certified in Functional Medicine through the Institute for Functional Medicine and A4M. After his daughter developed PANS in 2013, he and his wife Ellen, also a Functional and Integrative Medicine physician, were able to shut off the immune response, treat the infections responsible for her PANS presentation and bring her to full recovery. Since then, he has refined his process and has helped hundreds of children recover from PANS and PANDAS. In 2019, he successfully lobbied the Indiana legislature and helped pass a law which prohibits insurance companies in Indiana from denying coverage for IVIG for children with PANS and PANDAS. In 2023, Dr. Antoine wrote a best-selling book for Physicians on the management of PANS and PANDAS which has defined the standard of care in this illness.

Dr. Antoine has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

11:45 am – 12:30 pm MST | Lunch Break

12:30 – 1:30 pm MST



Transforming Care for PANS PANDAS: Shifting Mindsets, Strengthening Support, and Sparking Change

Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd

Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker; Principal and Clinical Director of Dearborn Academy, Greater Boston, Massachusetts; Co-founder of the National Alliance for PANS/PANDAS Action (NAPPA)

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Challenge the "either/or" approach to medical and mental health in PANS/PANDAS. Embrace a "both/and" model to equally prioritize physical and mental health, fostering comprehensive healing and systemic change.
- Identify best practices for collaboration among families, educators, and healthcare providers to create inclusive, holistic support systems.
- Explore strategies for advocacy and community engagement to drive improvements in healthcare policies, education, and public understanding of PANS/PANDAS.

Speaker Biography

Sheilah M. Gauch is the Principal and Clinical Director of Dearborn Academy, a therapeutic day school serving students with social, emotional, and learning needs. A Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and educator with over 20 years of experience, she works closely with caregivers, educators, and mental health professionals through consultation, training, and public speaking. As a mother of children diagnosed with PANS/PANDAS, Sheilah co-founded the Massachusetts Coalition for PANS/PANDAS Legislation, leading efforts to pass an insurance mandate and establish a permanent DPH Advisory Council, where she serves as co-chair. Sheilah sits on the boards of the Alex Manfull Fund and the Look. Foundation, and writes for the Psychology Today blog. She is a recipient of the 2020 Commonwealth Heroine Award and Boston College School of Social Work's 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award.

S. Gauch has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



1:30 – 2:30 pm MST



Exploring the Gut-Brain Connection: Advances in Microbiome Research and Therapeutic Innovations for OCD and PANS/PANDAS

Valerie Taylor, MD, PhD, FRCPC, ICD.D

Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Calgary; Departmental Science Advisor for Health Canada; CEO of Taylored Biotherapeutics

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze the connection between the gut-brain axis and its influence on mental health conditions, focusing on OCD and PANS/PANDAS.
- Discuss innovative research findings on gut microbiome modulation, including fecal transplant therapy, as potential treatments for neuropsychiatric disorders.
- Evaluate the clinical implications of gut microbiome studies, exploring how biomarkers and microbiome-based interventions could shape future therapeutic approaches for OCD and PANS/PANDAS.

Speaker Biography

Dr. Valerie Taylor, is a Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Calgary and Departmental Science Advisor for Health Canada. She completed medical school at Memorial University of Newfoundland, followed by Psychiatry residency, a PhD in Neuroscience, and post-doctoral fellowships at McMaster University. Dr. Taylor holds multiple certifications, including a Rotman Advanced Health Leadership diploma and Harvard Behavioral Economics program. Named one of Canada's top 100 most powerful women in STEM in 2020, her research focuses on medical psychiatry and the gut-brain axis. She leads clinical trials on microbiome-based treatments for mood disorders and oversees North America's largest neuroscience microbiome repository. With over 200 peer-reviewed publications, Dr. Taylor has received national and international funding. She also serves on boards including Kids Help Phone and Brain Canada and is CEO of Taylored Biotherapeutics.

Dr. Taylor has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

2:30 – 2:45 pm MST | Break

2:45 – 3:45 pm MST



Strengthening Physician Support & Advancing PANS PANDAS Care

Moderator: Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd

Panelists:

- Susan Swedo, MD - Dr. Swedo has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Wendy Edwards, MD, FRCPC - Dr. Edwards has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPC - Dr. Ubhi has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Alexa Bagnell, MD, FRCPC - Dr. Bagnell has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Jennifer Frankovich, MD, MS - Dr. Frankovich has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Paul Arnold, MD, PhD, FRCPC - Dr. Arnold has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Valerie Taylor, MD, PhD, FRCPC - Dr. Taylor has no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

► Learning Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify key gaps in physician knowledge and explore strategies for continued education, including CME-accredited training and peer collaboration.
- Examine the role of multidisciplinary collaboration in improving diagnosis, treatment, and the development of standardized clinical pathways for PANS PANDAS.
- Discuss emerging research priorities and opportunities for physicians to contribute to advancing evidence-based care and best practices.

S. Gauch has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

3:45 – 4:00 pm MST | Closing & Group Photo

HOSTS

Marnie Deschenes, BMus, RMT

Co-Founder, Inflamed Brain Alliance

M. Deschenes has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Richard Deschenes, BCM, BA

Co-Founder, Inflamed Brain Alliance

R. Deschenes has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

MODERATORS

Sheilah Gauch, LICSW, MEd

Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker; Principal and Clinical Director of Dearborn Academy, Greater Boston, Massachusetts; Co-founder of the National Alliance for PANS/PANDAS Action (NAPPA)

S. Gauch has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Tim Ubhi, MRCP, FRCPCH

Consultant Pediatrician in London, England specializing in PANS/PANDAS, leading groundbreaking research, treating 1,400+ patients, and founding Europe's first PANS clinic and the Children's e-Hospital

Dr. Ubhi has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

SCIENTIFIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair - Paul Arnold, MD, PhD, FRCP

Professor, Departments of Psychiatry and Medical Genetics, University of Calgary, Cumming School of Medicine

Dr. Arnold has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Marnie Deschenes, BMus, RMT

Co-Founder, Inflamed Brain Alliance

M. Deschenes has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Richard Deschenes, BCM, BA

Co-Founder, Inflamed Brain Alliance

R. Deschenes has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

Kirsten Popowich, BSc (May 2025)

Initiatives Coordinator, Inflamed Brain Alliance

K. Popowich has no relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business involves producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

OVERALL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the evolving diagnostic criteria and key symptoms of Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS) and Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS) to improve early recognition and accurate diagnosis.
- Evaluate the physiological and psychological complexities of post-infection inflammation in PANS PANDAS and explore evidence-based, alternative, and integrative treatment approaches for comprehensive care.
- Enhance collaboration among healthcare providers, educators, and families by fostering empathy, understanding, and effective communication, ultimately improving patient outcomes and support for individuals affected by PANS PANDAS.

ACCREDITATION / CREDIT DESIGNATION STATEMENT

This event is an Accredited Group Learning Activity (Section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and approved by the University of Calgary Office of Continuing Medical Education and Professional Development. Participants may claim a maximum of 13 hours (credits are automatically calculated).