

Early Cancer Institute Annual Symposium

Thursday 9th October 2025 | 2 - 6pm

CRUK Cambridge Institute Lecture Theatre

Programme

Join us for an afternoon of insight and collaboration, where leading experts from across disciplines will explore the latest advances in early cancer detection.



Peter Sasiemi



Clare Turnbull



Sarah Blagden



Gonia Gozdecka

Keynote & Lightning Talks | Posters | Networking

#ECISymposium2025



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**



**Early Cancer
Institute**

Agenda

14:00	Welcome & Introduction - Prof Rebecca Fitzgerald
Session 1: Chair Dr Siddhartha Kar	
14:10 - 14:50	The future of cancer screening and early detection trial design Prof Peter Sasiemi
14:30 - 14:50	Genomic risk stratification to inform cancer early detection: optimising benefit, minimising harm Prof Clare Turnbull
14:50 - 15:10	Q&A chaired by Dr Siddhartha Kar
15:10 - 15:30	BREAK
Session 2	
15:30 - 16:00	Early Career Talks <i>Introduced by Dr Alex Frankell</i> Detecting Gliomas through IDH1 R132H-specific T-cell receptor signatures in peripheral blood Iñigo Ayestaran Widespread methylation convergence in clonally distinct foci of multifocal prostate cancer and implications for clinical utility Tamsin Robb Spatial transcriptomics reveals molecular and cellular features in Barrett's oesophagus years before malignant progression John Lizhe Zhuang
16:00 - 16:20	Blood cancer prevention: stopping the most common precursor of acute myeloid leukaemia in its tracks Dr Gonia Gozdecka, <i>introduced by Dr Caroline Watson</i>
16:20 - 17:00	The concept and reality of delivering targeted cancer prevention into the clinic Prof Sarah Blagden, <i>introduced by Dr Tom Mitchell</i>
17:00-18:00	Closing remarks followed by refreshments and networking

Speaker profiles

Invited speakers in agenda order



Peter Sasiemi

Peter Sasiemi CBE FMedSci is Professor of Cancer Epidemiology at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and Director of the Cancer Research UK Cancer Prevention Trials Unit at QMUL.

After graduating in mathematics from the University of Cambridge, he obtained a doctorate in biostatistics from the University of Washington. Returning to the UK, he worked with Jack Cuzick at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and later at QMUL before moving to King's College London where he was Director of King's Clinical Trials Unit.

Professor Sasiemi's research applies epidemiological methods to cancer screening. He designs and runs clinical trials of early detection and prevention interventions.

He has published extensively on cervical screening and HPV vaccination including on the YouScreen trial of self-sampling in cervical screening non-attenders. He is currently collaborating with Professor Rebecca Fitzgerald to evaluate her oesophageal capsule sponge technology; and is one of the lead investigators on the NHS-Galleri Trial evaluating GRAIL's multi-cancer early detection blood test in population screening.

In 2023 he received The Don Listwin Award for Outstanding Contribution to Cancer Early Detection. In 2025 he was awarded a CBE for services to cancer early detection and prevention.



Clare Turnbull

Clare is Professor of Translational Cancer Genetics in the Division of Genetics and Epidemiology at the Institute of Cancer Research, London.

Having trained in general medicine and specialised in Clinical Genetics, she also works as an NHS consultant in Clinical Cancer Genetics at The Royal Marsden. Additionally, she holds an honorary appointment in Public Health Medicine at National Disease Registration Service (formerly at Public Health England). She spent 5 years working at Genomics England as clinical lead for the 100,000 Genomes Project Cancer Programme.

Her research focuses on statistical, population and public-health-related analyses to inform implementation of cancer susceptibility genetics for risk stratification, cancer early diagnosis and prevention. Research areas include (i) genomic variant interpretation (ii) assembly, linkage and analysis of NHS genomic and cancer data (iii) pragmatic pathways for scaling of genomic testing for BRCA genes (including the BRCA-DIRECT, BRCA-RETRO and NHS Jewish Community BRCA testing programmes).

Speaker profiles

Early Career Researcher short talks



Iñigo Ayestaran

Iñigo is a Research Associate in Jamie Blundell's group at the Early Cancer Institute, University of Cambridge.

After graduating with a BSc in Biochemistry from the Autonomous University of Madrid, he trained as a computational biologist at the University of Cambridge. He then worked as a staff bioinformatician at Steve Jackson's lab in Cambridge, before joining Jamie Blundell's group in 2019 as a PhD student, funded by the MRC. His research focuses on the development and application of quantitative methods to T-cell receptor repertoire data.



Tamsin Robb

Tamsin is a Research Associate in the Dev Group at the Early Cancer Institute, University of Cambridge.

She moved to Cambridge from New Zealand, where she completed her PhD in tumour evolution. She proudly describes herself as 'damp lab', working at the intersection of the wet and dry lab disciplines to identify early molecular signals of prostate cancer. She loves working at the intersection of disciplines, and has previously collaborated with mathematicians, software developers and architects on the development of an augmented reality cancer visualisation.



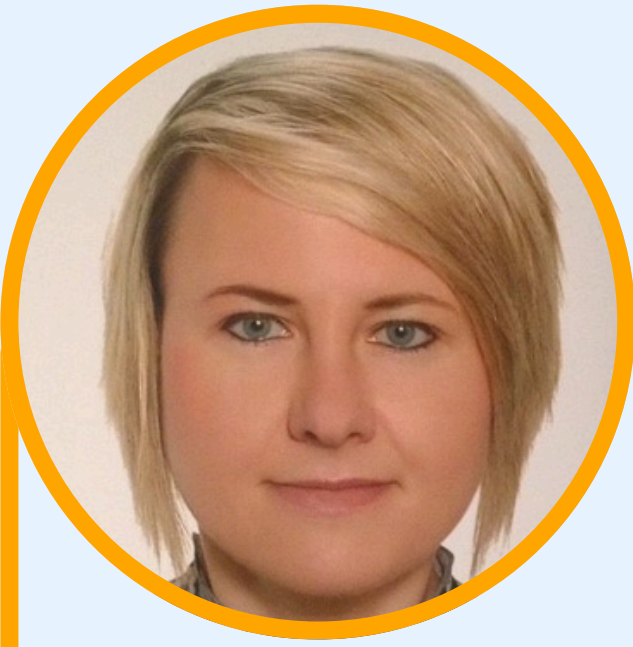
John Lizhe Zhuang

Senior Research Associate at the Early Cancer Institute, University of Cambridge.

John completed his PhD in 2016 at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, University of Melbourne, in Australia. He then joined Rebecca Fitzgerald's group as a postdoc, focusing on the cell of origin and development of Barrett's oesophagus. Over the years, he has been awarded several CRUK grants, and in 2023 he was promoted to Senior Research Associate. His current work centres on organoid models and spatial omics to understand cancer initiation, development, and progression.

Speaker profiles

Invited speakers in agenda order



Malgorzata (Gonia) Gozdecka

Gonia is an Assistant Research Professor in the groups of Professor George Vassiliou and Professor Brian Huntly at the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute, University of Cambridge.

She obtained her MSc in Biotechnology from the Jagiellonian University in Poland, followed by a PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology at the Paterson Institute for Cancer Research, University of Manchester. She then undertook postdoctoral research at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute and at the Cambridge Stem Cell Institute. Her work explores DNMT3A mutations in clonal haematopoiesis and leukaemogenesis, with a focus on blood cancer prevention.



Sarah Blagden

Professor Sarah Blagden is a medical oncologist and clinician-scientist at the University of Oxford where she leads an RNA biology lab exploring post-transcriptional mechanisms of gene regulation in tumorigenesis.

She conducted a PhD at the University of Cambridge and completed speciality training at Addenbrooke's, the Royal Marsden Hospital and the Drug Development Unit at ICR. From 2006-2015, she was Director of Early Phase Trials at Imperial College London and, from 2017-2021, Director of the Early Phase Clinical Trials Unit at the University of Oxford and now leads Oxford's Oncology Clinical Trials Office (OCTO) which specialises in Precision-Prevention and Early Detection (PPED) studies.

Sarah also now leads the GO-Precise initiative between Oxford and industry partners to explore precancer biology and develop cancer preventives.

She has considerable experience in designing clinical trials, developing methodologies such as complex innovative designs and considering their regulatory aspects.

Posters

Please take the opportunity to view the posters during the break and at the end of the event.

No.	Author	Title
1	Ahsen Ustaoglu	Early Detection of Barrett's oesophagus using a circulating protein biomarker panel applied to capsule sponge supernatant
2	Cameron Wilson	Collecting multifactorial breast cancer risk information: Evaluating the MyCanRisk tool
3	Daniel Jacobson	Profiling genetic diversification of Barrett's oesophagus using single cell-derived organoids
4	Emma Hazelwood	Clinical features of genomic instability in early-stage non-small cell lung cancer
5	Holly Barber	Understanding the role of the androgen receptor in the DNA damage response to enable effective combination therapies in prostate cancer
6	Kalpana Ganesan	Microbial associations with cancer in the rectum and hepatic flexure: Insights from metagenomic analysis
7	Katie Honan	High-resolution clonal reconstruction of TRACERx plasma reveals novel insights into non-small cell lung cancer metastasis evolution
8	Lily Taylor	Enabling multifactorial risk assessment in primary care: an umbrella review and development of a Target Product Profile for risk prediction tools
9	Matthew Ford	Development of genetically defined preclinical ovarian cancer models to study premalignant progression and chemoprevention strategies
10	Samuel Hackett	In vivo lineage tracing using methylation barcodes in the protocadherin gene cluster.
11	Venetia D'Arcy	Discovering targets for AML prevention using deep duplex sequencing
12	Woody Zhang	Detecting chromosomal instability in low-purity, non-invasive samples with AstroCNA
13	Xiaomeng Zhang	Mammographic density, breast cancer susceptibility gene variants and breast cancer risk.
14	Chris Steel	Clonal stalling underlies multi-drug resistance in paediatric Burkitt Lymphoma
15	Lucia Coral	Cancer Research Horizons: translating research results into patient benefit
16	Leanne Wu	Integrated epidemiological and molecular data yields insights into the relationship between precancerous Barrett's and oesophageal adenocarcinoma
17	Nandini Karthik	Spatial profiling of signet ring cell foci and in-vitro modelling of hereditary diffuse gastric cancer to identify risk stratification markers and therapeutic targets
18	Lucy Faulkner	Identifying high methylation entropy regions in prostate cancer
19	Joaquín Araos Henríquez/ Diana Campos	Ageing remodels the senescent cell landscape of lung cancer
20	Mary Denholm	Circulating biomarkers of senescence following anti-cancer treatment in non-small cell lung cancer
21	Jianfeng Ge	cGAS-STING signalling in oncogenically-stressed cells promotes lung cancer initiation and progression
22	Safya Nasir	Validation and functional characterization of ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) progression markers
23	Nareh Safieh-Garabedian	Healthcare organisational readiness to implement risk-stratified breast screening in Canada: A cross-sectional questionnaire study
24	Bethan White	Modelling Individual-level Uncertainty due to Missing Data in Multifactorial Breast Cancer Risk Prediction
25	Henson Lee Yu	Epigenetic drivers of localised prostate cancers reveal neuronal and microenvironmental reprogramming and inform liquid biopsy biomarkers
26	Wenrui Guo/ Frank McCaughan	Using human models of lung cancer to develop the evidence base for first-in-human chemoprevention trials
27	Hamish MacGregor	Apparent Li-Fraumeni TP53 variants in healthy adults are predominantly somatic
28	Annie Huang	Machine learning-based plasma proteomic signatures outperform clinical models in risk stratification for lung cancer screening
29	Filipa Reis	Targeting chromatin remodeller-mediated vulnerabilities to PARPi/ARSi in prostate cancer
30	Akemi Ramos-Yamasaki	LEGACY: Longitudinal profiling of T-cell receptor beta (TCR β) repertoires in healthy individuals

Thank you

We hope you have enjoyed the 2025 Early Cancer Institute Annual Symposium. Please do complete the feedback form - link below - to assist with planning for future events.

Event Feedback Form:

<https://forms.gle/RowCdTGoXvZv2ht16>

Keep an eye out for our regular seminars and events at www.earlycancer.cam.ac.uk/events

