

World Cancer Congress 2026

Programme and Scientific Highlights

Official Congress Embargo Policy: All oral abstracts are embargoed until the start time and date of the session in which they are delivered (see [Programme](#) and abstract details below), or at the official press conference on Thursday 24 September at 1.40pm in Hong Kong (5.40am GMT/UTC), whichever comes first.

Embargo on all Poster abstracts (e-Library) lifts at 8.01am Hong Kong time (00.01 GMT/UTC) Thursday 24 September.

Below are highlighted:

- Official press conference topics
- Select scientific abstracts and interview opportunities
- Programme themes and selected sessions of media interest
- Key speakers and experts available for interview

Each abstract will be presented in a three-minute rapid-fire format. Abstracts are grouped into 30-minute or one-hour thematic sessions.

Only registered media can attend the presentations and/or access the abstracts in PDF format at the World Cancer Congress e-library.

For interview requests with abstract authors, a full list of abstracts, or further information:

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Press conference materials – embargoed until Thurs 24 Sept, 5.40am GMT

The press conference will be held in S224 on Thursday 24 September at 1.40-2.20pm

The IARC Perspective on Lung Cancer Screening

One of the first major international updates to global lung cancer screening recommendations in recent years. These are presented in the embargoed article to be published at the time of the press conference in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

From policy to practice: learning from Australia's National Lung Cancer Screening Programme

Dorothy Keefe, CEO, Cancer Australia

Australia launched its national programme in July 2025 and has enrolled more than 73,000 participants. The session will explore how screening is being implemented in practice, including equity considerations and reaching high-risk communities.

Other abstracts of interest – Embargoed until start of session

Lung cancer risk and prevention

Proteomic signature for persistent smoking effects among former smokers and its association with lung cancer risk

Presented on Thursday 24 September from 14:40-15:40, Rapid Fire Stage 1 (RF07 – Epidemiology in Action: Populations and Partners).

Study identifying a lasting biological "scar" of smoking that remains detectable years after smoking cessation and continues to be associated with elevated lung cancer risk.

Projected global lung cancer burden linked to waterpipe smoking

Presented on Friday 25 September from 15:10-16:10, Rapid Fire Stage 1 (RF20 – Screening, Vaccination and Prevention / Cancer Care Delivery, Outcomes and Health Policy)

IARC modelling study projecting the future lung cancer burden attributable to waterpipe smoking between 2025 and 2050. Waterpipe smoking is often perceived as less harmful than cigarettes and is growing in popularity, particularly among younger populations. One of the first long-range estimates of its future cancer impact. The study highlights that the Western Pacific Region is projected to contribute the greatest number of lung cancer cases linked to waterpipe smoking.

Cancer in conflict settings

Assessing the resilience and system gaps of the Ukrainian oncology care system during wartime

Presented on Thursday 24 September from 15:40-16:10, Main Stage (AL05 – Access and Resilience in Cancer Care).

National assessment of Ukraine's oncology system during wartime, identifying major gaps in diagnostics, treatment access, workforce capacity, and financing, while documenting how cancer services have adapted to remain operational despite the conflict.

Impact of war on cancer presentation and outcomes

Presented on Friday 25 September from 15:10-16:10, Rapid Fire Stage 1 (RF20 – Screening, Vaccination and Prevention / Cancer Care Delivery, Outcomes and Health Policy).

Drawing on the experience of Palestinian cancer patients affected by the conflict in Gaza, this study provides rare quantitative evidence of how war can disrupt cancer diagnosis, treatment and patient wellbeing, with children more likely to be diagnosed at an advanced stage following the outbreak of conflict.

The burden of cancer in Palestine: epidemiological analysis and systemic challenges

Abstract e-library - Practice policy and advocacy reports 01

Comprehensive assessment of cancer control in Palestine, highlighting how restricted access to care, workforce and infrastructure constraints, and ongoing instability affect cancer outcomes, while outlining a roadmap for strengthening cancer services nationally.

Cancer risk and susceptibility

Association of Tobacco and Nicotine Use with Colorectal Cancer Screening Adherence: Findings from BRFSS 2016–2023

Abstract e-library - Scientific Study 01

Study examining colorectal cancer screening uptake among more than 746,000 adults in the United States, finding that smokers and vapers were less likely to participate in screening than non-users. The findings highlight missed opportunities for prevention and early detection among groups already at elevated cancer risk.

Pan-cancer MSI/MMRd screening identifies clinically actionable Lynch syndrome beyond colorectal and endometrial cancers and novel founder variants in India

Presented on Friday 25 September from 16:10-16:40, Main Stage (AL11 – Strengthening Prevention and Screening).

Study suggesting broader tumour screening could improve detection of inherited cancer risk, identifying Lynch syndrome, an inherited condition linked to colorectal and other cancers, in a wider range of tumour types than is currently recognised and highlighting previously undescribed genetic variants in India.

Sleep patterns and breast cancer risk: a prospective cohort study integrating multi-omics and machine learning

Abstract e-library - Scientific Study 07

Study combining sleep data, genomics, metabolomics and machine learning to identify sleep disruption patterns associated with elevated breast cancer risk.

Accelerated biological ageing and cancer susceptibility

Presented on Friday 25 September from 15:10-16:10, Main Stage (AL10 – Research and Personalised Care / Developing Lived Experience Programmes).

Analysis of more than 380,000 UK Biobank participants showing that accelerated biological ageing may increase the risk of multiple cancers and identifying biological pathways potentially involved in that process.

Colorectal cancer mortality among younger adults

Presented on Thursday 24 September from 14:40-15:40, Rapid Fire Stage 1 (RF07 – Epidemiology in Action: Populations and Partners).

International assessment from 49 countries suggesting that increasing colorectal cancer incidence among younger adults may be translating into rising mortality in multiple countries. [Published study](#) (June 2026), author available for interview.

Spatial Exposomics Identifies Pesticide Mixtures Associated with Cancer Risk and Environmental Inequities at the National Scale

Presented on Thursday 24 September from 13:30-14:30, Main Stage (AL03 – Tobacco Control and Risk Factors).

Study linking mixtures of pesticides, rather than individual chemicals, to cancer risk in Peru, identifying geographic clusters of elevated risk and suggesting that the burden falls disproportionately on socio-economically disadvantaged communities. [Published study](#) (April 2026), author available for interview.

Programme highlights

Thursday 24 September

Where are we now? The global state of cancer control (Plenary1)

Examines how countries are responding to a growing global cancer burden, what progress has been achieved over the past decade, and where major gaps remain in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care. Speakers include Dr Jie He, Director of China's National Cancer Center, on the implementation of the Healthy China 2030 strategy and its implications for national cancer control, and Professor Chung-mau Lo, Secretary for Health, Hong Kong SAR Government. *Thurs 24 Sept, 09:10-10:10. Convention Hall A-B-C.*

AI to Impact: From Algorithms to Equitable Cancer Screening at Scale

Explores how artificial intelligence is being applied to cervical and breast cancer screening, from image analysis and risk stratification to implementation in real-world healthcare settings, with examples from China, India and Africa. *Thurs 24 Sept, 10:40-12:10. S221.*

Increasing Attention on Lung Cancer: Turning Global Commitments into Action (Flagship Session)

Examines how countries can translate the recently adopted Integrated Lung Health Resolution into practical action on lung cancer prevention, early detection and screening. The session will feature new evidence on lung cancer screening from IARC, implementation experiences from different regions, patient perspectives, and policy tools to accelerate progress. *Thurs 24 Sept, 16:10-17:10. S224-S225.*

Friday 25 September

Where are we going? Breakthroughs and the future of cancer care (Plenary 2)

This session is focused on cutting-edge developments, innovation, and the future direction of cancer care. *Fri 25 Sept, 08:30-09:30. Convention Hall A-B-C.*

Will Precision Oncology Deliver a Healthier World? (Big Debate)

Leading experts debate whether precision oncology can realistically fulfil its promise beyond the world's wealthiest health systems and what is needed to ensure equitable access to advances in genomic medicine. *Fri 25 Sept, 09:40-10:40. Theatre 1.*

Accelerating Equitable Cancer Genomics: From Data Sovereignty to Global Implementation

Formal launch of a major *Lancet Oncology* Commission examining how cancer genomics and precision oncology can be implemented more equitably, particularly in populations and countries historically underrepresented in genomic research. *Fri 25 Sept, 11:10-12:40. S221.*

Cancer Care in Humanitarian Crises: From Neglect to Action

Examines how cancer diagnosis, treatment and palliative care can be maintained during conflict, displacement and humanitarian emergencies, with experiences from Ukraine, Gaza, and other crisis-affected settings. *Fri 25 Sept, 14:00-15:00. Convention Hall A.*

Countering Cancer Misinformation: Safeguarding Public Health in the Age of Disinformation

Explores the growing influence of misinformation, commercial interests, and digital media on public understanding of cancer prevention and risk, and strategies to counter harmful narratives. *Fri 25 Sept, 14:00-15:00. Theatre 1.*

Strengthening Cancer Systems to Meet Future Challenges: World Bank Cancer Strategy

Examines how governments and international organisations can finance and strengthen cancer systems in the face of rising cancer burdens, constrained resources, and growing healthcare demands. *Fri 25 Sept, 14:00-15:00. Convention Hall B.*

Driving Progress on the WHO Global Breast Cancer Initiative: Collaborative and Data-Driven Approaches from LMICs (Flagship Session)

Examines how countries are implementing the WHO Global Breast Cancer Initiative, with a focus on early detection, timely diagnosis, treatment and patient navigation. Speakers will present practical examples of strengthening breast cancer services and measuring progress in low- and middle-income countries. *Fri 25 Sept, 14:00-15:00. S224-S225.*

Boosting Multinational Collaboration to Innovate and Strengthen Health Systems to Eliminate Cervical Cancer

Showcases how international collaboration is helping countries drive progress in eliminating cervical cancer through vaccination, screening, treatment, capacity building, and technology transfer. *Fri 25 Sept, 16:40-17:40. Convention Hall C.*

Saturday 26 September

Impact, Influence, and Societal Change

Examines how change happens in cancer control, including the roles of political leadership, civil society, social media, advocacy, and broader societal trends in shaping cancer outcomes. *Sat 26 Sept, 08:30-09:30. Convention Hall A-B-C.*

Investment to Impact: Patient-Focused Organisations Driving People-Centred Care (Flagship Session)

Highlights how patient organisations and people with lived experience are shaping policy, generating evidence, and improving cancer care. The session explores how patient-focused organisations can strengthen health systems while advancing people-centred approaches to cancer control. *Sat 26 Sept, 09:40-10:40. S224-S225.*