

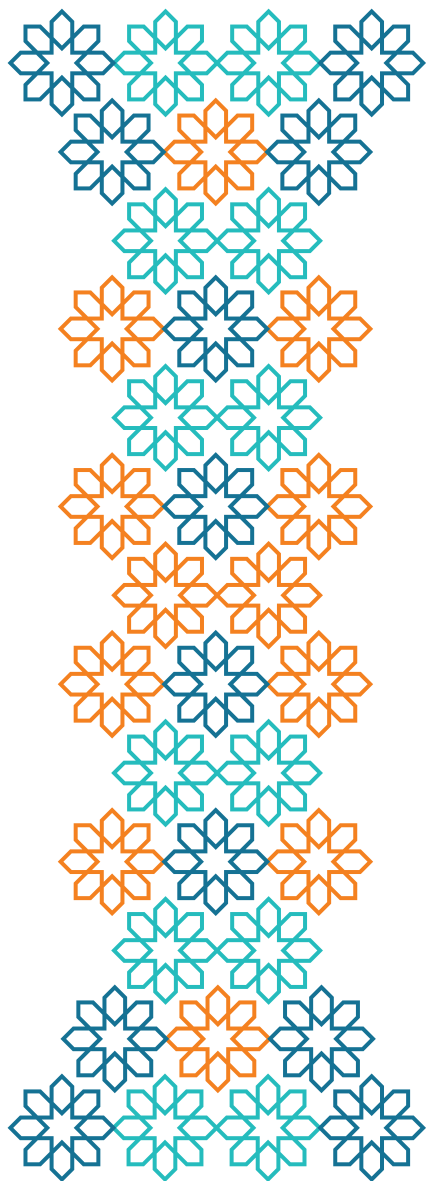
Hosted by
MENACTRIMS
Middle East North Africa Committee for
Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis



Pre-MENACTRIMS SYMPOSIUM

Thursday, October 31, 2024
Al Qasr Ballroom, Jeddah Hilton
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia





Agenda: MS and Special Populations

18:30-19:00 Registration and Welcome Coffee

19:00-19:45

Lectures

Chairs: B. Yamout (AE)

Co-Chair: M. Alkhawajah (SA)

19:00-19:04 Welcome and Introduction - *B. Yamout (AE) and C. Oreja-Guevara (ES)*

19:04-19:16 Epidemiology of MS in the Middle East

S. Bohlega (SA)

19:16-19:28 Pregnancy and Multiple Sclerosis: Safety Aspects and Treatment Modalities

C. Oreja-Guevara (ES)

19:28-19:40 Managing Multiple Sclerosis in Individuals Aged 55 and Above

P. Vermersch (FR)

19:40-19:45 Live Q&A & Panel Discussion

All faculty, facilitated by
M. Alkhawajah (SA)

Unfolding the Subject Matter

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in the Middle East is seeing an increasing prevalence, with regional differences influenced by genetic, environmental, and socioeconomic factors. Understanding these patterns helps inform tailored approaches to MS diagnosis and treatment in this unique population.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) primarily affects women of childbearing age, with symptoms that can influence the ability to conceive and impact family planning decisions. Prof. Oreja-Guevara will present an update on “Pregnancy and Multiple Sclerosis: Safety Aspects and Treatment Modalities”, providing the latest insights on this critical topic.

Managing MS in individuals aged 55 and above presents unique challenges due to the complex interplay between aging, comorbidities, immunosenescence, and MS pathophysiology. Prof. Patrick Vermersch will deliver a comprehensive review of “Managing Multiple Sclerosis in Individuals Aged 55 and Above”, discussing current knowledge and best practices in this evolving field.

Meet the Panelists



Prof. Bassem I. Yamout
Neurology Institute Director
Harley Street Medical Centre
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Bassem Yamout is currently Professor of Clinical Neurology at the American University of Beirut Medical Center and the Director of the Neurology Institute and head of the MS Center at Harley Street Medical Center, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. He graduated from the medical school at the American University of Beirut in 1984, received his training in neurology at the University of Cincinnati-Ohio followed by a fellowship at the Montreal Neurological Institute-McGill University. In 1988 he joined the faculty of the American University of Beirut. His main focus of research is in the field of multiple sclerosis. He is currently president of the MENACTRIMS, head of clinical research at the Multiple Sclerosis Center, fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, and member of multiple regional and international MS advisory boards.

Dr. Yamout is one of the leading experts on multiple sclerosis in the Middle East and Arab region with recent research on epidemiology of the disease in the region, quality of life of patients in the Middle East, novel therapies such as stem cell transplantation and venous stenosis, and the impact of wars on the course of multiple sclerosis. In addition he is currently the principal investigator on several ongoing international multiple sclerosis research trials. Dr. Yamout has authored many research and review papers and is currently Chief Editor of the MS newsletter "MS today", and on the editorial board of "Multiple Sclerosis and Related Disorders".



Meet the Panelists



Prof. Mona Alkhawajah

Consultant Neurologist & Assistant Professor

**Neuroscience Center, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center,
Al Faisal University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

Dr. Mona Marwan Alkhawajah is a consultant neurologist, at the Neurosciences Center, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center, and an Assistant Professor at the college of Medicine of Al Faisal University. She is specialized in Clinical Neuroimmunology and Multiple Sclerosis.

Dr. Alkhawajah served as a member of the Research Ethics Committee for three years, and as the Program Director of the Neurology Residency Training Program at KFSHRC-R for around 5 years. She received her Medical Degree from King Saud University, Riyadh. She then pursued her residency training in Neurology at KFSH-R. After obtaining her Saudi Board in Neurology, she completed her Fellowship in Neuroimmunology at the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver, Canada.

Dr. Alkhawajah has established the first Multiple Sclerosis support group in the Kingdom; the first meeting took place in June 2014. She is the organizer of the first (2015), second (2017), third (2019), and fourth (2023) "Walk for MS" in Saudi Arabia, and is actively involved in educating the public about MS. She made several public appearances in National and International TV, talking about MS and advocating for patients who have the disease.



Meet the Panelists



Prof. Saeed Bohlega
Consultant Neurologist, Professor of Neurology
King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Prof. Saeed Bohlega obtains his basic medical training at King Saud University and graduated in 1980. Then in 1982, he went to Canada where he did his training in Neurology at University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC. He trained with Professor Don Paty. He develops specialist interest in Multiple Sclerosis and he did subspecialty training in Neurophysiology. In 1989, he joined as a Consultant Neurologist in the Department of Neurosciences at King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre and worked as a Consultant and then as a Senior Consultant and appointed as Professor of Neurology at Al Faisal University.

Prof. Bohlega is a member of many prestigious neurological societies like the American Neurological Association and the British Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons. He worked as a Section Head of Neurology then as a Chairman of Department of Neurosciences. Also, he is a founder and a chairperson of the National Saudi Board of Neurology for ten years. He is the chairman of Saudi Multiple Sclerosis Advisory Group. Also, Prof. Bohlega is the President of the Saudi Neurology Society and the President Elect for the PAN Arab Union of Neurological Societies (PANUS).



Meet the Panelists



Prof. Celia Oreja-Guevara
Vice Chair of Neurology
University Hospital San Carlos
Madrid, Spain

Professor Celia Oreja-Guevara is Vice Chair of Neurology and Head of Multiple Sclerosis Center at the University Hospital San Carlos, Madrid and Professor of Neurology at the University Complutense, Madrid, Spain.

After receiving her MD from the University Complutense, Madrid, Professor Oreja-Guevara completed a PhD in neuroimmunology at the Max-Planck-Institute for Neurobiology, University of Munich, Munich (Germany). She then went on to complete a residency in the Department of Neurology at the University of Bochum, Bochum (Germany) and a postdoctoral fellowship in neuroimaging at the University Hospital San Raffaele, Milan (Italy). She has also held posts at the University of Düsseldorf (Germany), Hospital de Fuenlabrada and at the University Hospital La Paz, both in Madrid. Professor Oreja-Guevara's research interests centre on family planning, menopause, clinical and neuroimaging correlations in MS and the use of optical coherence tomography. Neuromyelitis optica (NMO) is among her other therapy areas of interest, and Professor Oreja-Guevara is actively involved in the evaluation of new drugs for the treatment of MS and NMO. As a principal investigator, she has participated in more than 30 MS clinical trials and currently heads ParadigMs, an independent and non-profit international group of Multiple Sclerosis experts.

Besides her clinical and research endeavors, Professor Oreja-Guevara has held leadership roles in several neurology-focused organizations and academic societies, such as the Demyelinating Diseases Group and the Neuroimaging Group of the Spanish Neurological Society.



Meet the Panelists



Prof. Patrick Vermersch
Vice President of Research in the fields of Life and Health Sciences
University of Lille
Lille, France

Prof. Patrick Vermersch studied medicine at Lille University Hospital (France), where he graduated in Neurology. Between 1990 and 1994 he pursued his training in basic research fields, mainly in cellular biology, obtaining a PhD addressing biochemical abnormalities associated with Alzheimer's and other neurodegenerative diseases. He also conducted research related to the characterization of post-transcriptional anomalies of tau proteins. His research interests then turned to multiple sclerosis (MS).

Prof. Patrick Vermersch is head of one of the University of Lille's departments of Neurology which deals with MS and other neuroinflammatory diseases. The department is primarily concerned with neuroimmunology and markers of disease evolution.

Prof. Patrick Vermersch is currently vice-president of research in the fields of Life and Health Sciences at the University of Lille. In 2000, he and colleagues created the first MS network in northern France to improve MS care and research. His current areas of interest are prognostic markers in MS and neuroimmunology in general. He participates in many treatment protocols for MS. He has authored or co-authored approximately 380 scientific papers. His H-index (Web of Science) is 54.



NOTES

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

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