

UPMC INTERNATIONAL ONCOLOGY FORUM

Innovations in Clinical and Research Practice

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026

Hilton Garden Inn Zagreb

**8:00–
9:00**

REGISTRATION

**9:00–
9:20**

OPENING REMARKS

Joel Nelson, MD (UPMC, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine)

Elizabeth Wild, MBA (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center)

Marija Bubaš, MD, PhD (Ministry of Health – State Secretary)

Evgenia Sidereas (U.S. Embassy in Croatia – Deputy Chief of Mission)

**9:20–
10:30**

BLOCK 1 — Transforming Cancer Care in Croatia: Epidemiology, Accreditation, and National Planning

Moderators: Dragan Primorac, MD, PhD / Joel Nelson, MD

**9:20–
9:40**

Eduard Vrdoljak, MD, PhD (University Hospital of Split, University of Split School of Medicine): *Croatian Oncology Transformation. From Zero to Hero. The Costs and Benefits of a Data-Driven National Cancer Plan*

**9:40–
10:00**

Stjepko Pleština, MD, PhD (University Hospital Center Zagreb, University of Zagreb School of Medicine): *Accreditation and Certification of Oncology Centers in Croatia: Standards, Requirements and Designation*

**10:00–
10:20**

Mario Šekerija, MD, PhD (Croatian Institute of Public Health, Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, University of Zagreb School of Medicine): *Epidemiology of Cancer in Croatia: Recent Trends and Comparisons*

**10:20–
10:30**

Questions from Audience

**10:30–
11:50**

BLOCK 2 — Advances in diagnostics and predicting patient response to drive treatment decisions

Moderators: Adrian Lee, PhD / John Byrd, MD

**10:30–
10:50**

Prof. Dragan Primorac, MD, PhD (St. Catherine Specialty Hospital; Universities of Split, Osijek and Rijeka, Schools of Medicine; University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine; The Pennsylvania State University): *The AI-Driven Advances in Cancer Diagnostics and Personalized Treatment*

**10:50–
11:10**

Adrian Lee, PhD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center; University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine): *Precision Oncology: Translating Complex Genomics into Tailored, Evidence-based Therapies and Pharmacogenomics for Patients*

**11:10–
11:40**

John Byrd, MD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center; University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine): *Drug Development in Cancer: The basics*

**11:40–
11:50**

Questions from Audience

11:50– 13:20	BLOCK 3 — Translating research advancements into radiation oncology practice Moderators: Heath Skinner, MD, PhD / PierCarlo Gentile, MD
11:50– 12:10	Dag Zahirović, MD (University Hospital Center Rijeka, Medical School University of Rijeka): <i>Stereotactic Radiotherapy: Our Experience at University Hospital Center Rijeka</i>
12:10– 12:30	Heath Skinner, MD, PhD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center; University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine): <i>Learning from Every Patient: AI and the Future of Integrated Cancer Care</i>
12:30– 12:50	PierCarlo Gentile, MD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center San Pietro FBF, Rome): <i>The Evolution of Radiotherapy—from IGRT to Adaptive RT</i>
12:50– 13:10	Ravi Patel, MD, PhD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center; University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine): <i>Dosimetry-Guided RPT: Moving Beyond One-Size-Fits-All Dosing</i>
13:10– 13:20	Questions from Audience
13:20– 14:20	LUNCH
14:20– 15:30	BLOCK 4 — Translating research advancements into medical oncology practice Moderators: Sergio Rizzo, MD, PhD / Marko Bebek, MD
14:20– 14:40	Kristina Krpina, MD, PhD (Clinic for Lung Diseases, University Hospital Centre Zagreb; University of Zagreb School of Medicine): <i>Implementing Population-Based Lung Cancer Screening: Lessons from Croatian National Program</i>
14:40– 15:00	Sergio Rizzo, MD, PhD (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at IRCCS ISMETT, Palermo, Italy): <i>Optimizing Perioperative Treatment Strategies in Thoracic Malignancies: The ISMETT UPMC Experience</i>
15:00– 15:20	Ana Tečić Vuger, MD, PhD (University Hospital for Tumors, “Sestre milosrdnice” University Hospital Center, Zagreb): <i>Multimodal De-Escalation Strategies in Early Breast Cancer</i>
15:20– 15:30	Questions from Audience
15:30– 16:40	BLOCK 5 — Optimizing patient outcomes and access to world class care Moderators: Renata Dobrila Dintinjana, MD, PhD / Prof. Paul Kelly
15:30– 15:50	Josipa Flam, MD, PhD (University Hospital Center Osijek, University of J.J. Strossmayer Osijek School of Medicine): <i>Comprehensive Genomic Profiling-Guided Treatment in Croatia: Our National Experience</i>
15:50– 16:10	Diwakar Davar, MD, MBBS, M.Sc (UPMC Hillman Cancer Center; University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine): <i>The Gut–Immune Axis in Cancer Immunotherapy: From Pittsburgh Discovery to Everyday Clinical Practice</i>
16:10– 16:30	Prof. Paul Kelly (Medical Director, UPMC Oncology Network Ireland): <i>Building a Clinical Trials Program at a UPMC Department in Ireland</i>
16:30– 16:40	Questions from Audience
16:40– 16:50	CLOSING REMARKS

Continuing Medical Education (CME) Accreditation

UPMC International Oncology Forum: Innovations in Clinical and Research Practice conference has been accredited by the Croatian Medical Chamber for Continuing Medical Education (CME). Active participants will receive **15 CME credits**, and registered attendees will receive **10 CME credits**.

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