

# ESSIC 2026

22-24 Oct



## LONDON

[WWW.ESSICMEETING.EU](http://WWW.ESSICMEETING.EU) - [WWW.ESSIC.ORG](http://WWW.ESSIC.ORG)

**ADVANCED PROGRAMME\_030926**



## CONFERENCE CONCEPT

Chronic pelvic pain has traditionally been studied within **organ-based silos**—bladder, prostate, gynaecology, and bowel—often leading to fragmented clinical pathways and limited integration of emerging scientific insights. However, growing evidence suggests that persistent pelvic pain reflects **dynamic neuroplastic changes across the peripheral and central nervous systems**, involving neuroimmune signalling, central sensitisation, and complex cross-organ neural pathways.

In recent years, advances in **pain neuroscience, neuroimaging, systems biology, and translational clinical research** have begun to reshape our understanding of chronic pelvic pain. These developments highlight the importance of viewing pelvic pain not simply as a disorder of individual organs, but as a **network condition involving interactions between the pelvic organs, the spinal cord, and higher brain centres**.

The European Society for the Study of Interstitial Cystitis (ESSIC) has long played a pivotal role in advancing research and collaboration in bladder pain and related disorders. This meeting builds on that tradition by bringing together a **multidisciplinary European and international faculty**, including urologists, urogynaecologists, neuroscientists, pain physicians, physiotherapists, psychologists, and translational scientists. By fostering dialogue across disciplines and across countries, the meeting aims to strengthen **European collaboration in pelvic pain research and clinical innovation**, while also engaging leading global experts in the field.

The conference will explore the **biological, clinical, and therapeutic implications of neuroplasticity in chronic pelvic pain and related disorders**, including interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome, chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome, vulvodynia, endometriosis-associated pain, pelvic floor myalgia, and other overlapping pain syndromes.

Through keynote lectures, focused panels, workshops, and scientific presentations, the programme will examine how emerging insights from neuroscience and clinical research can inform **more precise phenotyping, improved treatment strategies, and new translational research directions**.

The scientific narrative of the meeting progresses through four interconnected themes:

### **Mechanisms → Clinical Phenotypes → Interventions → Future Directions**

This framework is designed to move the field beyond traditional organ-based models toward a **more integrated understanding of pelvic pain as a network disorder**, supporting the development of more effective and patient-centred approaches to diagnosis, management, and research.

The meeting will also provide an opportunity for participants to contribute to a forward-looking discussion on the **future priorities for pelvic pain science and care in Europe and beyond**, helping to shape collaborative research agendas and clinical practice in the coming decade.



## Welcome message from ESSIC President

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is my great pleasure, on behalf of the International Society for the Study of IC/BPS (ESSIC), to invite you to join us in London for the ESSIC International Congress 2026, taking place from 22-24 October at the prestigious Venue of the the Royal Society of Medicine.

Since its foundation, ESSIC has played a pivotal role in advancing scientific understanding, clinical practice, and international collaboration in the field of Interstitial Cystitis/Bladder Pain Syndrome (IC/BPS). Through the dedication of our members and the contribution of leading experts worldwide, ESSIC has established itself as the foremost multidisciplinary scientific society devoted to this complex and challenging condition. The 2026 Congress comes at a particularly important moment in the evolution of our field. Rapid advances in the understanding of chronic pelvic pain mechanisms, neuroinflammation, imaging, phenotyping, and personalised therapeutic approaches are reshaping both research and clinical care. These developments will be reflected throughout a scientific programme designed to provide participants with the most current evidence and expert perspectives available.

A major highlight of this year's meeting will be the presentation and discussion of the updated ESSIC Guidelines, representing the culmination of extensive international collaboration and expert consensus. These recommendations will help define future standards in the diagnosis, classification, and management of IC/BPS and related conditions, making this Congress an essential event for clinicians, researchers, and healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients with chronic pelvic pain. Beyond the scientific programme, ESSIC 2026 will offer a unique opportunity to exchange ideas, foster collaborations, and engage with colleagues from across Europe and around the world in one of the world's most vibrant and inspiring cities. I warmly encourage you to join us in London as we continue to advance knowledge, challenge existing paradigms, and shape the future of our field together.

I look forward to welcoming you personally to ESSIC 2026.



## Welcome message from ESSIC 2026 Meeting Chair

Greetings from London! A very warm welcome to one of the best and most cosmopolitan cities in the world for ESSIC 2026 international conference.

For those new to ESSIC, may I suggest this international organisation has been regarded by many as a premier league learned society on the subject of interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome (IC/BPS). The ESSIC criteria for diagnosis and classification published in 2008 were immediately adopted by the American Urological Association (AUA) and the European Association of Urology (EAU). Since then, ESSIC continued to flourish with world class experts sharing their latest knowledge and experience in this complex field of pelvic pain.

This year, we plan to broaden the scope to cover areas related to all forms of chronic pelvic pain, from male pelvic pain to the often related medical conditions such as fibromyalgia and Sjögren's. Nutraceuticals and pelvic surgery are new topics to be included. Exciting novel imaging techniques such as one that can detect inflammation and potentially used as a theranostic tool will also be presented in this wide ranging coverage of the disease. Perhaps a special emphasis will be on the subject of neuroplasticity. This seems prudent, given the basis of IC/BPS is neurogenic inflammation. A significant section will be devoted to neuromodulation.

So, please join us to be educated by the true international leaders in the field of IC/BPS. The venue will be the beautiful and historic Royal Society of Medicine in Central London. I look forward to seeing you all soon!



## SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

|            |       |       |                                      |                 |
|------------|-------|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 22/10/2026 | 12.45 | 13.30 | REGISTRATION                         |                 |
|            | 13.30 | 13.50 | Introduction                         | Room A          |
|            | 13.50 | 14.40 | Session 1                            | Room A          |
|            | 14.40 | 15.30 | Session 2                            | Room A          |
|            | 15.30 | 15.50 | Break                                | Room A          |
|            | 15.50 | 16.10 | keynote lecture 1                    | Room A          |
|            | 16.10 | 17.00 | Session 3                            | Room A          |
|            | 17.00 | 17.50 | Session 4                            | Room A          |
| 23/10/2026 | 08.15 | 10.45 | WORKSHOPS - WS1 90 min + WS 2 60 min | Room A          |
|            | 08.15 | 10.45 | WORKSHOPS - WS3 90 min + WS 4 60 min | Room B          |
|            | 10.45 | 11.10 | Coffee Break                         |                 |
|            | 11.10 | 12.00 | Session 5                            | Room A          |
|            | 12.00 | 12.20 | keynote lecture 2                    | Room A          |
|            | 12.20 | 13.00 | Abstract Session 1-2                 | Room A + Room B |
|            | 13.00 | 13.45 | Light Lunch                          |                 |
|            | 13.45 | 14.35 | Session 6                            | Room A          |
|            | 14.35 | 14.55 | keynote lecture 3                    | Room A          |
|            | 14.55 | 15.15 | Sponsored Lecture - NON CME          | Room A          |
|            | 15.15 | 15.40 | Coffee Break                         |                 |
|            | 15.40 | 16.30 | Session 7                            | Room A          |
|            | 16.30 | 16.50 | keynote lecture 4                    | Room A          |
|            | 16.50 | 17.40 | Session 8                            | Room A          |
|            | 17.40 | 18.00 | keynote lecture 5                    | Room A          |
|            | 18.00 | 18.45 | ESSIC AGM                            |                 |
| 24/10/2026 | 08.30 | 09.20 | Session 9                            | Room A          |
|            | 09.20 | 10.30 | Session 10                           | Room A          |
|            | 10.30 | 10.50 | Coffee Break                         | Room A          |
|            | 10.50 | 11.40 | Session 11                           | Room A          |
|            | 11.40 | 12.30 | Session 12                           | Room A          |
|            | 12.30 | 13.20 | Session 13                           | Room A          |
|            | 13.20 | 13.45 | Closing Ceremony & Abstract Awards   | Room A          |



Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>

**12.45-13.30 | Registration**

**13.30 – 13.50 | Greetings & Opening Ceremony**

**ESSIC 2026 Annual Meeting: in memoriam of Jean Jacques Wyndaele**

**13.50-14.50 | Session 1 | Basic Science: IS IC/BPS A BRAIN DISEASE? Rethinking the Neurobiology of Bladder Pain**

**Coordinators: Keng Ng, Claire Fowler**

- |     |                                                                                                       |                  |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 15' | The Central Sensitisation Hypothesis: From Peripheral Inflammation to Brain Rewiring                  | J. Panicker      |
| 15' | The immune system in IC/BPS                                                                           | J.F. Jhang       |
| 15' | The role of functional imaging in BPS/IC and FAPI Imaging- New Paradigm in understanding inflammation | M. Krishnamurthy |
| 15' | Discussion                                                                                            |                  |

**14.50-15.40 | Session 2 | Diagnosis 1: THE BLADDER AND ITS NEIGHBOURS -- Overlap, Mimics and Misdiagnosis**

**Coordinators: Sachin Malde, Dick Janssen**

- |     |                                                                                   |            |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 15' | IC/BPS and UTI: Two Sides of the Same Coin, or Two Completely Different Diseases? | V. Khullar |
| 15' | IC/BPS and OAB: Distinct Disorders or Points on a Continuum?                      | Henry Lai  |
| 20' | Discussion                                                                        |            |

**15.40-16.00 | Coffee Break**

**16.00 – 16.20 | Keynote Lecture 1**

**Tomohiro Ueda**

**Artificial Intelligence in Bladder Pain: The Coming Revolution**

**16.20-17.00 | Session 3 | GUIDELINES UNDER THE MICROSCOPE - Are We Actually Following the Evidence?**

**Coordinator: Sachin Malde, Mauro Cervigni**

- |     |                                                                 |                |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 15' | The ESSIC Guidelines in 2026: What's New and What's next?       | Dick Janssen   |
| 15' | The EAU Guidelines on Chronic Pelvic Pain: A Critical Appraisal | Francisco Cruz |
| 20' | Discussion                                                      |                |

**17.00 – 18.00 | Session 4 | THE CONFUSABLE DISEASES - When the Bladder Is Not to Blame**

**Coordinator: Nucelio Lemos, Claus Riedl**

- |     |                                                                                            |                  |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 15' | Pudendal Neuralgia Masquerading as IC/BPS: How Often Are We Making the Wrong Diagnosis?    | Eric Bautrant    |
| 15' | Endometriosis-Associated Bladder Pain: The Gynaecological Masquerade                       | D. Tsepov        |
| 20' | Pelvic Floor Myalgia as the Primary Driver of Bladder Pain: Physiotherapy's Neglected Role | Carolin Vandyken |
| 10' | Discussion                                                                                 |                  |

Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>

**08.15 – 10:45 | WORKSHOPS ROOM A**

**08.15-09.30 | WS 1**

**Phenotyping IC/BPS: Urodynamics, Cystoscopy, and urethral pain**

**Coordinators: Sachin Malde**

- |       |                                                                                     |                  |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 08.15 | Urodynamic findings in IC/BPS: separating signal from noise                         | Eskinder Solomon |
|       | UPP, EMG and MAPLE: what do they add in IC/BPS?                                     | Eskinder Solomon |
| 08.35 | Cystoscopy in IC/BPS : How and why?                                                 | Robert Evans     |
| 08.50 | Phenotyping urethral pain -- introducing the New London Urethral Pain Questionnaire | Keng Ng          |
| 09.00 | Discussion                                                                          |                  |

**09.30-10.30 | WS 2**

**Managing the Multidimensional IC/BPS Patient - A Biopsychosocial Approach**

- |       |                                                                               |                  |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 09:30 | Physical examination including pelvic floor assessment: a structured approach | Carolin Vandyken |
| 09:45 | When pain becomes the patient: the psychology of chronic bladder pain         | Caroline Selai   |
| 10:00 | Building a multidisciplinary pelvic pain team                                 | Elise De         |
| 10:15 | Discussion                                                                    |                  |



## 08.15 – 10:45 | WORKSHOPS ROOM B

### 08.15-09.30 | WS 3

#### Histopathology in IC/BPS and in Hunner Lesion Disease

**Coordinators:** Y. Akiyama, K. Lako

- 08.15 How to do it: the importance of a right biopsy
- 08.30 Histopathologic Criteria: In IC/BPS
- 08.45 Histopathologic Criteria: In HLD
- 09.00 The ESSIC SCORE
- 09.15 Discussion

Mauro Cervigni  
K Lako  
D Maeda  
Y. Akiyama

### 09.30-10.30 | WS 4

#### GAG Replacement treatment

**Coordinator:** Kristene Whitmore

- 09.30 Rationale behind
- 09.50 How to do it: catheter or device
- 10.05 Literature and a critical revaluation
- 10.20 Discussion

Chris Chapple  
Sandor Lovasz  
Kristene Whitmore

## 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee Break

### 11.00 – 12.00 | Session 5 | IC/BPS in male patients

**Coordinator:** Paul Abrams

- 11.00 What does the literature say
- 11.15 Chronic Pelvic Pain Syndrome in Men: the pelvic dilemma Chronic: prostatitis or IC/BPS?
- 11.30 Bladder Pain in the Transgender Patient
- 11.45 Discussion

Paul Abrams  
Tufan Tarcan  
Jennifer Anger

## 12.00 – 12.30 | Keynote Lecture 2

### IBS, Fibromyalgia, Rheumatoid disorders, Sjögren's Syndrome and IC/BPS

#### Shared Biology or Shared Misfortune?

**M. Pontari**

## 12.30-13.10 Abstract Session 1

**Moderators:** Dick Janssen, Sachin Malde

- 1 A Personalized Sequential Intravesical Treatment Protocol for Bladder Pain Syndrome/Interstitial Cystitis: Technical Description and Initial Clinical Experience**  
*Karasev Aleksandr, Repkina Anastasiia, Plekhanova Olga, Natalya Krotova, Manasherova Dina, Kasyan George, Pushkar Dmitry*
- 2 A Phenotype-Based Framework for Earlier Targeted Intervention in IC/BPS: Integrating International Guidelines and Contemporary Evidence**  
*Kravchick Sergey, Parekattil Sijo, Ginsburg Natasha, Moldwin Robert*
- 3 Association of Neutrophil-to-Lymphocyte Ratio with Cystoscopic Inflammatory Phenotypes in Interstitial Cystitis/Bladder Pain Syndrome**  
*Erten Kadir Serefhan, Sariduman Nursah, Kaba Mustafa, Koparal Murat Yavuz, Sen Ilker*
- 4 Does the O'Leary-Sant Questionnaire Reflect Clinical Severity in Hunner Lesion Interstitial Cystitis?**  
*Karasev Aleksandr, Repkina Anastasiia, Plekhanova Olga, Krotova Natalya, Manasherova Dina, Kasyan George, Pushkar Dmitry*
- 5 International Declaration of the IC/BPS Patient Advocate Network: A Call for Urgent, Coordinated, and Courageous Action**  
*Santurri Laura, Basu Balaka, Jankowski Barbara, Meijlink Jane, Milne Dot, Osborne Jill, Scholtes Mathilde, Withers Michelle*

## 13.10- 14.10 Lunch



## 14.10 – 15.00 | Session 6 | IC/BPS in female patients

**Coordinator: Mauro Cervigni, Anna Padoa**

- 14.10 Menopause, Genitourinary Syndrome and Bladder Pain: The Overlooked Connection
- 14.25 Vulvodynia and IC/BPS: Distinct Conditions or Overlapping Phenotypes?
- 14.40 Gynaecological disorders associated with IC/BPS
- 14.50 Discussion

Jennifer Moldwin  
Oriol Porta  
Kristene Whitmore

## 15.00-15.40 | Abstract Session 2

**Moderators: Lenore Ackerman, Rob Moldwin**

- 6 Preliminary experience in managing patients with chronic cystitis using an individual therapeutic approach**  
*Repkina Anastasiia, Karasev Alexander*
- 7 Right-Sizing Urology's Role in IC/BPS: Expert Consultation, "I See" Communication, and Shared Care**  
*Santurri Laura, Buffington Tony, Hanno Philip*
- 8 The posterior fornix syndrome in women with pelvic organ prolapse as important differential diagnosis of interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrom (IC/BPS)**  
*Liedl Bernhard, Antoniewicz Aleksander, Schmidbauer Lena, FRitz Nikola, Witczak Magdalena*
- 9 Transition in Surgical Management of Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia in a Tertiary Centre: From TURP to Contemporary Minimally Invasive and Laser Therapies**  
*Challapalli Pranavi, Badr Ahmed, Abdul Rauf, Liew Matthew*
- 10 Women with Urinary Urgency and Chronic Pelvic Pain – Prevalences of Pelvic Organ Prolapse and Bladder Pain Syndrome / Interstitial Cystitis**  
*Schmidbauer Lena, Witczak Magdalena, Yassouridis Alexander, Antoniewicz Aleksander, Liedl Bernhard*

## 15.40 – 16.00 Coffee Break

### 16.00-16.30 | Keynote Lecture 3

**Jennifer Anger**

**Sexual dysfunction in IC/BPS: Assessment and management**

### 16.30-17.00 | Keynote Lecture 4 | ICS State of the Art Lecture

**Elise De**

**Peripheral neuropathies and IC/BPS/Neurodiagnostics for Pelvic Pain**

### 17.00-17.15 | NON-CME Lecture

Neuroinflammation in the Gut-Bladder-Brain Axis

TheoharisTheoharides

### 17.15-17.45 | Keynote Lecture 5

**IC/BPS & the metabolome: the new emerging concepts**

**Federico Villani, Lenore Ackerman**

## 17.45-18.45 - ESSIC AGM – ESSIC Members only

Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>

## 08.30 – 09.30 | Session 9 | Treatment 1 (According to Phenotype)

**Coordinator: Robert Moldwin and Mauro Cervigni**

- 15' Does Body Mapping Effectively Discriminate IC/BPS Phenotypes?
- 15' Botulinum Toxin in IC/BPS: Who, how, and where to inject?
- 15' Intravesical Therapies: which instillation for which patient?
- 15' Discussion

Henry Lai  
Quentin Clemens  
Rob Moldwin  
Claus Riedl



## 09.30-10.30 | Session 10 | Treatment 2 THE NEUROMODULATION REVOLUTION - Rewiring Pain from Periphery to Brain

**Coordinator: Elise De**

- |     |                                                                                                 |                 |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 15' | Sacral Neuromodulation in IC/BPS: Proven Treatment or Overhyped Intervention?                   | Michael Samarin |
| 15' | Tibial Nerve Stimulation -- Transcutaneous, Percutaneous or Implanted: Does Route Matter?       | Chris Chan      |
| 15' | Central Neuromodulation. TMS, tDCS and the Brain as a Therapeutic Target in Chronic Pelvic Pain | A. Balossier    |
| 15' | Discussion                                                                                      |                 |

## 10.30-10.50 | Coffee Break

## 10.50-11.50 | Session 11| The Patient Voice: Global IC/BPS Patient Advocacy group

**Round table**

Coordinator: Mathilde Scholtes

Jane Meijlink - International Painful Bladder Foundation, Loredana Nasta - President IC Italian Association

Mary Lynne Van Poelgeest-Pomfret - President WFIPP, Michelle Battye - ERN eUROGEN Programme Manager

## 11.50-13.05 | Session 12 | Surgical and interventional Approaches

**Coordinator: N. Lemos, Eric Bautrant**

- |       |                                                                                       |                 |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 11.50 | Nerve Blocks and Interventional Pain Procedures in IC/BPS: Working Across Specialties | Moeen Tavakkoli |
| 12.05 | Surgical approaches for pudendal neuralgia                                            | Eric Bautrant   |
| 12.20 | Intrapelvic Nerve Entrapment                                                          | Nucelio Lemos   |
| 12.35 | Major Surgery for end stage IC/BPS: What's the best approach?                         | Robert Evans    |
| 12.50 | Discussion                                                                            |                 |

## 13.05-13.15 | Abstract awards.

**Coordinator: Dick Janssen**

## 13.15-13.30 | Closing Ceremony: Mauro Cervigni, Keng Ng

## FACULTY 2026

|                   |                     |                  |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Paul Abrams       | Mauro Cervigni      | Henry Lai        | Anna Padoa        | Moein Tavakkoli                  |
| Lenore Ackerman   | Francisco Cruz      | Nucelio Lemos,   | Jalesh Panicker   | Theoharis Theoharides            |
| Yoshiyuki Akiyama | Elise De            | Sandor Lovasz    | Michel Pontari    | Denis Tsepov                     |
| Jennifer Anger    | Robert Evans        | Daichi Maeda     | Oriol Porta Roda  | Tomohiro Ueda                    |
| Anne Balossier    | Claire Fowler       | Sachin Malde     | Claus Riedl       | Carolin Vanduycken               |
| Michelle Battye   | Jia-Fong Jhang      | Jane Meijlink    | Michael Samarin   | Mary Lynne Van Poelgeest-Pomfret |
| Eric Bautrant     | Dick Janssen        | Jannifer Moldwin | Mathilde Scholtes | Federico Villani                 |
| Chris Chan        | Mohan Krishnamurthy | Robert Moldwin   | Caroline Selai    | Kristene Whitmore                |
| Chris Chapple     | Vik Khullar         | Loredana Nasta   | Eskinder Solomon  |                                  |
| Quentin Clemens   | Kostika Lako        | Keng Ng          | Tufan Tarcan      |                                  |

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### UEMS EACCME ACCREDITATION

The ESSIC 2026 Annual Meeting, London, UK 22/10/2026 - 24/10/2026, will file for accreditation by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME®). Each medical specialist should claim only those hours of credit that he/she actually spent in the educational activity.

### CONGRESS VENUE

#### 1 Wimpole Street London

1 Wimpole Street is one of London's leading conference, and events venues. 1 Wimpole Street, home to the [Royal Society of Medicine](#), offers the perfect blend of traditional and modern surroundings, located close to Oxford Circus, Bond Street, Harley Street and Marylebone Lane.

### REGISTRATION

Online registration will be available from April 30<sup>th</sup> 2026 at <https://www.essicmeeting.eu/> to October 15<sup>th</sup>.

After this date, registration will still be possible during the event, until reaching the maximum number of participants.

### REGISTRATION FEES

|                                            | Members  | Non-Members |
|--------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| <i>MD, MhD</i>                             | € 380,00 | € 450,00    |
| <i>Nurses, Midwives &amp; Care Workers</i> | € 250,00 | € 300,00    |
| <i>Students, Residents, Patients</i>       | € 120,00 | € 180,00    |

\*Registration Fee is meant for each person, in Euros, VAT free. The registration fee includes the certificate of attendance, coffee breaks and lunch. Lunch is not provided on Thursday and Saturday. For group registrations, please contact the Organizing Secretariat in order to take advantage of registration packages. Please note that seating is limited and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Workshop rates:** €40,00 for members and non-Members.

The above registration fees are reserved to physicians, patients and other healthcare professionals. Industry representatives, non-sponsoring the Congress but willing to attend, are kindly invited to register online by selecting the dedicated fee €800,00.

On site rates will be charged to registrations received after 31 Aug. Registration fees are 50% refundable of the total amount before 31st July. After 31st July, no refund will be possible.

### Sponsored Sessions (Non-CME)

Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>

### Sponsors & Exhibitors

ESSIC 2026 Annual Meeting will be organised with an unrestricted educational sponsorship from pharmaceutical and medical companies.

**WWW.ESSICMEETING .EU**

**Organising Secretariat and CME Provider**



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