

ISTAART Professional Interest Area (PIA) Day

Saturday, July 26 > Westin Harbour Castle



Toronto, Canada | All Times are in US Eastern Time | In-person attendance only

ISTAART Professional Interest Area (PIA) Day is an exclusive event for current and new ISTAART members attending the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC). The event features targeted sessions, interactive panels, debates and networking opportunities, running concurrently with the AAIC preconference and ISTAART Immersives workshop programs. PIA Day provides a platform for members to engage with peers and experts, fostering collaboration and engagement within the ISTAART community.

	Harbour A	Harbour B	Harbour C	Pier 2&3
9-10 a.m.	Neuropsychiatric Syndromes	Immunity And Neurodegeneration Sex And Gender Differences In Alzheimer's Disease	Atypical Alzheimer's Disease	Perioperative Cognition And Delirium
10:15-11:15 a.m.	Neurophysiology	Vascular Cognitive Disorders	Diversity And Disparities	Limbic-Predominant Age-Related TDP-43 Encephalopathy
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Nutrition, Metabolism And Dementia	Clinical Trials Advancement And Methods	Sleep And Circadian Rhythms	Partnering With Research Participants
12:30-2:30 p.m.	PIA Resource Fair And Networking Lunch Enjoy lunch and network with colleagues while learning about PIA offerings.			
2:30-3:30 p.m.	Neuromodulatory Subcortical Systems	Cognition Subjective Cognitive Decline	Frontotemporal Dementia And Related Disorders	The Eye As A Biomarker For AD
3:45-4:45 p.m.	Nonpharmacological Interventions	Biofluid Based Biomarkers	Design And Data Analytics	PIA To Elevate Early Career Researchers (PEERs)

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Saturday, July 26 > 9-10 a.m.



Atypical Alzheimer's Disease

Harbour C

The Atypical Alzheimer's Disease PIA will feature a panel, showcasing the latest advancements in the field through 4-6 scientific presentations. The program will highlight emerging perspectives, including mechanistic, clinical, and methodological discoveries, and explore their implications for atypical forms of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) that are non-amnesic and hippocampal-sparing. We will focus on early career researchers by selecting either students or postdoctoral researchers to present their work. Following the scientific presentations, there will be an interactive panel discussion with a Q&A session for the audience.

Immunity And Neurodegeneration; Sex And Gender Differences In Alzheimer's Disease

Harbour B

This session features a collaboration between the Immunity and Neurodegeneration PIA and the Sex and Gender Differences in Alzheimer's Disease PIA. The focus will be on a debate that examines whether women's immune processes accelerate Alzheimer's Disease more than men's, or if there are no differences at all. The debaters are Dr. Kaitlin Casaletto from UCSF and Dr. Malú Tansey from Indiana University, with Kaitlin arguing in favor of the "accelerate" position. The format will include a 15-minute initial presentation from each side, followed by a 5-minute rebuttal and a brief Q&A session with the audience.

Neuropsychiatric Syndromes

Harbour A

The Neuropsychiatric Syndromes PIA session will explore recent advancements in the clinical management of Neuropsychiatric Syndromes, focusing on the recent approval of new medications and emerging research directions for treatment. We invite current and prospective PIA members, as well as those interested in this discussion, to join us for initial brainstorming. The session will begin with small breakout groups that promote collaboration between early-career researchers and trainees with senior investigators. This will be followed by a high-level debate and discussion, ultimately leading to the formulation of an action plan and an outline for a potential position paper on this topic, spearheaded by the PIA executive committee.

Perioperative Cognition And Delirium

Pier 2&3

The Perioperative Cognition and Delirium PIA will kick off with the announcement of the Publication of the Year award, featuring a brief podium presentation by the winner, followed by a Q&A session. This will lead into a debate addressing whether blood-based biomarkers for dementia-related diseases should be assessed prior to major surgery. Speakers will present arguments both for and against this practice, followed by a facilitated discussion that encourages audience participation.

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Saturday, July 26 > 10:15-11:15 a.m.



Diversity And Disparities

Harbour C

The Diversity and Disparities PIA session will focus on fostering professional relationships, beginning with introductions from the executive committee. Following that, there will be an engaging and timely debate on the provision of healthcare to participants in ADRD research. Speakers will advocate for both sides; proponents will highlight how these efforts aid in recruitment and serve as a stopgap for unequal access to healthcare, while opponents will point out the ethical, procedural, and financial challenges faced when providing clinical services during ongoing studies. An audience discussion will explore the short- and long-term implications of offering clinical services to research participants. Moderators will facilitate a balanced discussion, drawing out the implications for research participants, researchers, the scientific community and society as a whole.

Limbic-Predominant Age-Related TDP-43 Encephalopathy

Pier 2&3

Limbic predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy (LATE) is a recently defined construct that denotes amnesic presentation of older in context of accumulation of TDP-43 pathology in limbic structures of the brain. Despite its prevalence, LATE is difficult to diagnose during life as in most cases, it is comorbid with Alzheimer's pathology and there are no specific *in vivo* biomarkers. A recent set of consensus recommendations lays the groundwork for fostering research on LATE and creates a framework for its diagnosis during life. During the Limbic-Predominant Age-Related TDP-43 Encephalopathy PIA session, we will present this diagnostic framework and demonstrate its utility through various clinical vignettes. Attendees will also have the chance to ask questions and engage in discussions about challenges and opportunities.

Neurophysiology

Harbour A

Prof. Mihály Hajós (Yale University School of Medicine) will introduce and chair this session focused on exploring cutting-edge neurophysiological approaches to monitoring "white matter integrity in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease". Dr. Lara Krisst (Caltech) will share findings showing that implicit cognitive tasks reveal attentional impairments in pre-symptomatic individuals with AD biomarkers. Dr. Jeffrey Phillips (University of Pennsylvania) will present evidence that clinical variants of Alzheimer's disease display heterogeneous white matter degeneration patterns. Dr. Briar Nowling (University of Pennsylvania) will examine how differences in white matter tract integrity relate to regional tau accumulation and atrophy. Finally, Dr. Chandran V. Seshagiri (Cognito Therapeutics) will discuss how 40Hz sensory stimulation may preserve both neurophysiological signals and white matter integrity in patients with Alzheimer's disease. A moderated discussion focused on how these emerging measures may be integrated into early diagnostic and therapeutic strategies will follow.

Vascular Cognitive Disorders

Harbour B

The Vascular Cognitive Disorders PIA will host a debate and panel discussion on the state of *in-vivo* biomarkers for vascular cognitive impairment and dementia (VCID). Panelists will discuss the current need for biomarkers of VCID and their potential integration into the canonical ATN framework. Specific potential neuroimaging and biofluid markers of VCID will be described, and their validity and utility will be debated. Progress and barriers to using existing biomarkers of VCID in clinical trials will be discussed. The second half will invite questions and comments from the audience for interactive discussion.

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Clinical Trials Advancement And Methods

Harbour B

Expanding clinical trials for Alzheimer's Disease into low-resourced areas is crucial for enhancing representation, generalizability, and equity in research. During the Clinical Trials Advancement and Methods PIA session, experts from public, private, and non-profit sectors will share their insights to tackle the structural, regulatory, and logistical hurdles involved in conducting Alzheimer's Disease (AD) trials in these settings. This interactive discussion will feature innovative strategies for selecting sites, building capacity, and ensuring adherence to global trial standards.

Nutrition, Metabolism And Dementia

Harbour A

Deep Dives to discuss, identify research gap, brainstorm and summarize the role of nutrition and metabolism in AD/ABRD, from cell and animal-based research to community level research. There will be 5 discussion themes on each topic:

1. Cell-based and Animal-based research led by Dr. Fiona Harrison.
2. Nutritional Epidemiology and Multi-Omics Approaches use large datasets led by Dr. Debora Melo van Lent and Dr. Sophie Lefevre Arbogast.
3. Randomized Controlled Trials for Nutrition, Including Dietary Approaches and Supplements led by Dr. Gene Bowman and Dr. Aaron Smith.
4. Food Accessibility and Food Security as Determinants of Brain Health led by Dr. Claudia Suemoto.
5. Bioenergetics in Dementia Research/New Methods of Assessing Brain Metabolism by Dr. Owen Carmichael.

5-10 minutes of introductions and group/discussion themes. Attendees choose their discussion theme and join the respective tables.
30-40 minutes of discussions followed by 10-15 minutes of summary and key takeaways with the Publication of the Year award.

Partnering with Research Participants

Pier 2&3

The Partnering with Research Participants PIA will introduce the fundamentals of evaluation research and assist participants in developing foundational knowledge to evaluate and improve the engagement of individuals with lived experience in dementia research. It will emphasize participant involvement in three learning segments, each beginning with a 5-minute "theory burst" followed by active, structured discussions. The presentation will draw upon examples from two evaluations involving people living with dementia: the 2024 Walking the Talk for Dementia initiative and the Canadian CCNA EPLED program. This introductory session will be followed by a series of PIA-hosted educational webinars over the next year, designed to help participants navigate the evaluation process systematically. Didactic content will be provided to registrants in advance of each webinar to ensure that sessions can focus on moderated discussions and the collective building of knowledge.

Sleep And Circadian Rhythms

Harbour C

The Sleep and Circadian Rhythms PIA will facilitate a panel discussion focused on why sleep is not acknowledged as a modifiable risk factor in the Lancet Commission's dementia prevention guidelines. This session will highlight the current gaps that must be addressed for sleep to be recognized as a modifiable risk factor. A diverse panel of researchers and clinician-researchers specializing in various facets of sleep, circadian rhythms, and dementia research — including epidemiologists, clinical trial experts, and basic scientists — will discuss the latest advancements in the field. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage in the discussion and pose questions.

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PIA Resource Fair > 12:30-2:30 p.m.



Join us for the new PIA Resource Fair during the extended lunch break at PIA Day 2025! This event offers a great opportunity to connect with the Executive Committees of the PIAs listed below, learn about their ongoing initiatives, and explore ways to engage with them in a friendly and relaxed setting. Don't miss out on the chance to access numerous resources and opportunities while mingling with fellow attendees!

Alliance Of Women Alzheimer's Researchers (AWARE)

Clinical Trials Advancement And Methods

Cognition

Design And Data Analytics

Diversity And Disparities

Health Policy

Immunity And Neurodegeneration

Lewy Body Dementias

Limbic Predominant Age Related TDP-43 Encephalopathy

Neuromodulatory Subcortical Systems

Neurophysiology

Neuropsychiatric Syndromes

Nutrition, Metabolism And Dementia

Partnering With Research Participants

Perioperative Cognition and Delirium

Reserve, Resilience And Protective Factors

Sensory Health And Cognition

Sex And Gender Differences In Alzheimer's Disease

Sleep And Circadian Rhythms

Subjective Cognitive Decline

The Eye As A Biomarker For AD

ISTAART Professional Interest Area (PIA) Day

Saturday, July 26 > 2:30-3:30 p.m.



Cognition; Subjective Cognitive Decline

Harbour B

Clinicians and researchers are keen to establish the most effective method for identifying the subtle cognitive changes that arise at the onset of Alzheimer's disease pathology. The Cognition PIA and Subjective Cognitive Decline PIA will collaborate to facilitate a debate on the merits of using subjective versus objective measures for this assessment. They will evaluate both approaches in various aspects, including their relationship to early AD biomarkers, feasibility and scalability, efficiency, cultural bias, and their utility in clinical and research environments. After two presenters share their views, there will be a discussion involving the panel and audience, culminating in a vote to determine a "winner."

Frontotemporal Dementia And Related Disorders

Harbour C

The Frontotemporal Dementia and Related Disorders PIA session will provide a comprehensive overview of cutting-edge research on biomarkers for Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD) and related conditions, while also exploring sex and gender differences in FTD-related syndromes. Experts will share the most recent advances in neuroimaging, fluid biomarkers, digital markers, and innovative assessment methods, emphasizing their relevance in clinical settings and trials. We will also highlight emerging research regarding sex-related differences in FTD, particularly concerning behavioral and motor impairments, genetic factors, and variability in biomarkers. Throughout the session, speakers will integrate research and clinical insights, discussing the real-world implementation of biomarkers and the challenges involved in translating new findings into clinical trials. Experts from four continents will contribute perspectives on country-specific initiatives and the broader implications of incorporating biomarker research into clinical practice.

Neuromodulatory Subcortical Systems

Harbour A

The neuromodulatory subcortical system (NSS), a network of small subcortical brain nuclei, plays a crucial role in regulating key functions such as sleep cycles, mood and appetite control. Notably, some NSS nuclei show early pathological changes in neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's, which contribute to neuropsychiatric symptoms even before cognitive decline occurs and accelerate disease progression. However, the early involvement of the NSS in neurodegenerative diseases also presents promising opportunities for earlier diagnosis and therapeutic intervention. The Neuromodulatory Subcortical Systems PIA session will feature brief presentations from early career researchers on topics ranging from biomarkers to clinical manifestations, model systems and interventions. These talks will be followed by a short panel discussion and Q&A.

The Eye As A Biomarker For AD

Pier 2&3

In this deep dive session, the Eye as a Biomarker for AD PIA invites you on a journey into the PIA workgroups:

1. The Retinal Pathology Work Group, which focuses on reaching consensus on the descriptions of amyloid, tau, TDP-43, and α -synuclein pathology in the brain
2. The Harmonization And Stratification Work Group, which aims to harmonize imaging and study recruitment strategies for evaluating ocular imaging methods as potential biomarkers for AD.

PIA members interested in these areas will have an opportunity to learn about and join the manuscript discussion plans. The session will conclude with a summary of the main outcomes following group discussions.

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Saturday, July 26 > 3:45-4:45 p.m.



Biofluid Based Biomarkers

Harbour B

The Biofluid Based Biomarkers PIA will investigate the clinical use of blood-based biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease. A panel of experts, including Henrik Zetterberg, Michelle Mielke, Kaj Blennow, Tim MacLeod, and Suzanne Schindler, will engage participants in a dynamic discussion about the current status of biofluid biomarker implementation, sharing insights and identifying areas requiring further attention. The session will include case studies showcasing the clinical application of plasma biomarkers in diagnosing Alzheimer's disease. Practicing physicians Ana Pereira, Ashvini Keshavan, Jonathan Schott, and Ren Vandevrede will offer their unique perspectives, promoting a multidisciplinary dialogue on the practical uses of these biomarkers. Do not miss this opportunity to participate in the conversation and influence the future of Alzheimer's research and treatment.

Design And Data Analytics

Harbour C

The PIA will host a panel on the design and analytical aspects of non-pharmacologic clinical trials for adults living with dementia. Dr. Heather Allore will present PIA activities and resources relevant to these trials. Dr. Joseph Gaugler will discuss the EMBRACE Roybal Center that aims to advance research capacity for mechanistic-based home and community-based dementia care interventions. Through sponsorship from the National Institute on Aging, EMBRACE funds and supports trials rigorously evaluating complex, individualized dementia care interventions and provides educational resources to support researchers in developing and implementing behavioral intervention studies. The session will end with a Q&A joined by Drs. Ana Capuano and Emily Rogalski.

Nonpharmacological Interventions

Harbour A

The Nonpharmacological Interventions PIA is excited to present a panel on cognitive training. Come and hear Dr. Sylvie Belleville, a renowned expert in this field, discuss her work developing and evaluating cognitive training programs aimed at enhancing resilience. Her research explores the mechanisms that enable some individuals to better resist the effects of aging, as well as the personal characteristics that make certain people more responsive to cognitive training. The panel discussion will focus on cognitive training methods, evaluation tools, and learning from experience, so join us to discover more about this area of growing international interest.

PIA To Elevate Early Career Researchers (PEERs)

Pier 2&3

The PIA to Elevate Early Career Researchers will present an interactive session titled "From Idea to Impact: Crafting a Compelling Elevator Pitch" to help attendees ditch the networking jitters and make impactful connections at AAIC. This skill-building session will provide practical training in crafting effective elevator pitches. Participants will learn to articulate their research concisely for diverse audiences, refining their skills through interactive exercises and peer feedback. This session aims to equip early career researchers and clinicians with the tools and confidence needed to get conference-ready and network strategically.