

Multiple Sclerosis Without Borders:

**Enhancing Care, Rights and Research
across the EU**

Date: Wednesday, 1st July 2026

Time: 1 - 3PM

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



**MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS:
A TREATABLE CONDITION**

Prof. Orla Hardiman BSc, MB, BCh, BAO, MD, DSc, FRCPI, FAAN, FTCD, MRIA

Orla Hardiman is Professor of Neurology at Trinity College Dublin, and a Consultant Neurologist at Beaumont Hospital, where she has provided multidisciplinary care to Irish patients with neurological illness including Multiple Sclerosis and Motor Neuron Disease. She is an experienced clinical trialist.

She leads the National ALS Clinical Service in Ireland, which provides direct multidisciplinary care for over 80% of all Irish ALS patients, and which links closely with her Research Group at the Academic Unit of Neurology at Trinity College Dublin, which she also leads. She was Academic Director of Trinity Biomedical Science Institute (2014-2017) and HSE National Clinical Lead for Neurology (2019-2024).

She is a Principal Investigator in the Research Ireland funded FutureNeuro and ADAPT Research Centres, and leads the International PRECISION ALS and PRECISION MS Academic/Industry Consortium (www.precisionals.ie). She is an early member of the Project MinE ALS Genomics consortium, the Co-Chair of the European Network for Cure of ALS (ENCALS) and the European Treatment Initiative to Cure ALS (TRICALS), and is Editor in Chief of the journal Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and the Frontotemporal Degenerations.

She is the recipient of multiple international and Irish awards including the AAN Palatucci Award for Advocacy, the AAN Sheila Essey Award, the Healey Innovation Award, the Tom Connor Neuroscience Award, the Health Research Board Research Impact Award, the Science Foundation Ireland Researcher of the Year Award, the Trinity College Innovation Award, and the Royal College of Physicians Bryan Alton Medal.

Her research work is funded by Research Ireland, the Health Research Board, The American ALS Association, the British MND Association, the Irish MND Association, and the charity Research Motor Neuron.

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**ROLE OF HSE CORPORATE PHARMACEUTICAL UNIT, PCRS
IN THE NATIONAL REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS.**

Linda Fitzharris

**Head of HSE Corporate Pharmaceutical Unit & Head
of HSE Pharmacy Function, Primary Care
Reimbursement Service**

Linda Fitzharris is a pharmacist registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland since 2010, having qualified at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). She also holds a degree in Biochemistry from Trinity College Dublin, a Master's in Pharmacy from RCSI, and a Master's in Nutrition, Food and Health from UCD. More recently she has received a Professional Diploma in Health Economics from the Institute of Public Administration (IPA). She currently serves as Head of the HSE Corporate Pharmaceutical Unit (CPU) and Head of Pharmacy Function within the HSE Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS). The CPU is the key interface between the HSE and the pharmaceutical industry on medicine pricing and reimbursement applications. Linda sits on multiple governance committees and expert groups within the HSE and brings a wealth of experience from community pharmacy and healthcare policy.

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DIGITAL HEALTH AND AI

Dr. Guido Giunti MD PhD MBA

Dr. Guido Giunti is the Chief Data Officer at St. James's Hospital, Dublin, leading efforts to foster a data-driven culture with a human touch. He holds academic positions as an Adjunct Professor at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Oulu and University of Buenos Aires, contributing to medical education, digital health research, and the integration of emerging technologies into clinical practice. With a background in clinical medicine, digital health, and human-computer interaction, Guido has worked across academic, clinical, and industry settings in Europe. Recognized internationally for his contributions, he has received awards such as the JCI Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award and HIMSS Changemaker in Health. He has led multiple initiatives blending healthcare, technology, and entrepreneurship to drive meaningful change in the digital health landscape

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CROSS BORDER COLLABORATION

Dr. Jill McMahon BSc, MPhil, PhD.

Dr. Jill McMahon is a lecturer in Advanced Therapies and a Research Fellow in Dr. Una FitzGerald's multiple sclerosis research team at the University of Galway. She first started working in the MS field in the 1990s with Dame Professor Ingrid Allen, at the Institute of Pathology in Belfast, where she was trained in neuropathology and neurohistology, and was part of the team involved in banking post-mortem MS tissue. This tissue collection is now in the stewardship of Professor Denise Fitzgerald at Queens University Belfast and Jill continues to collaborate, in an advisory capacity, on the use of this valuable tissue for current MS research.

Having carried out research and published widely in the fields of gene and cell therapy, apoptosis, ER stress and mild traumatic brain injury, as well as MS, Jill has co-supervised many PhD and Masters students, all of whom researched different aspects of MS. She was also a member of the EU Horizon 2020-funded PMSMatTrain consortium, who collectively worked to develop treatments for progressive MS. The consortium included research centres and SMEs from 8 different EU countries and has funded training of 15 early-stage researchers.

Jill is a founder member, and current Republic of Ireland chair, of the All-Ireland Multiple Sclerosis Research Network (AIMS-RN).

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EUROPEAN PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

Eduard Andrei Pletea Vice President of the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP)

Eduard Andrei Pletea was elected Vice President of the European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP) in April 2026, succeeding Federica Balzani. He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2015 and joined the Romanian MS community through APAN in November 2017.

From February 2018, Eduard led advocacy and awareness initiatives at APAN, coordinating volunteer projects and engaging young people living with MS. In May 2018, he became a member of APAN's Board of Directors.

During his tenure, Eduard has been actively involved in fundraising, advocacy, awareness campaigns, and numerous national and international projects in collaboration with EMSP, EFNA, and MSIF. He has also contributed to EMSP's membership capacity-building programmes and developed initiatives focused on empowering young people living with MS.

In July 2021, Eduard was elected Vice President of APAN, where he oversaw budgeting, fundraising, awareness campaigns, and advocacy activities. In November 2024, he was elected President of APAN Romania, leading the organisation's strategic development and expanding its national advocacy, patient support, and education programmes.

As President of APAN and Vice President of EMSP, Eduard is committed to ensuring that the voices of people living with MS are meaningfully represented in healthcare, research, and policymaking, while promoting patient empowerment and equitable access to high-quality care across Europe.