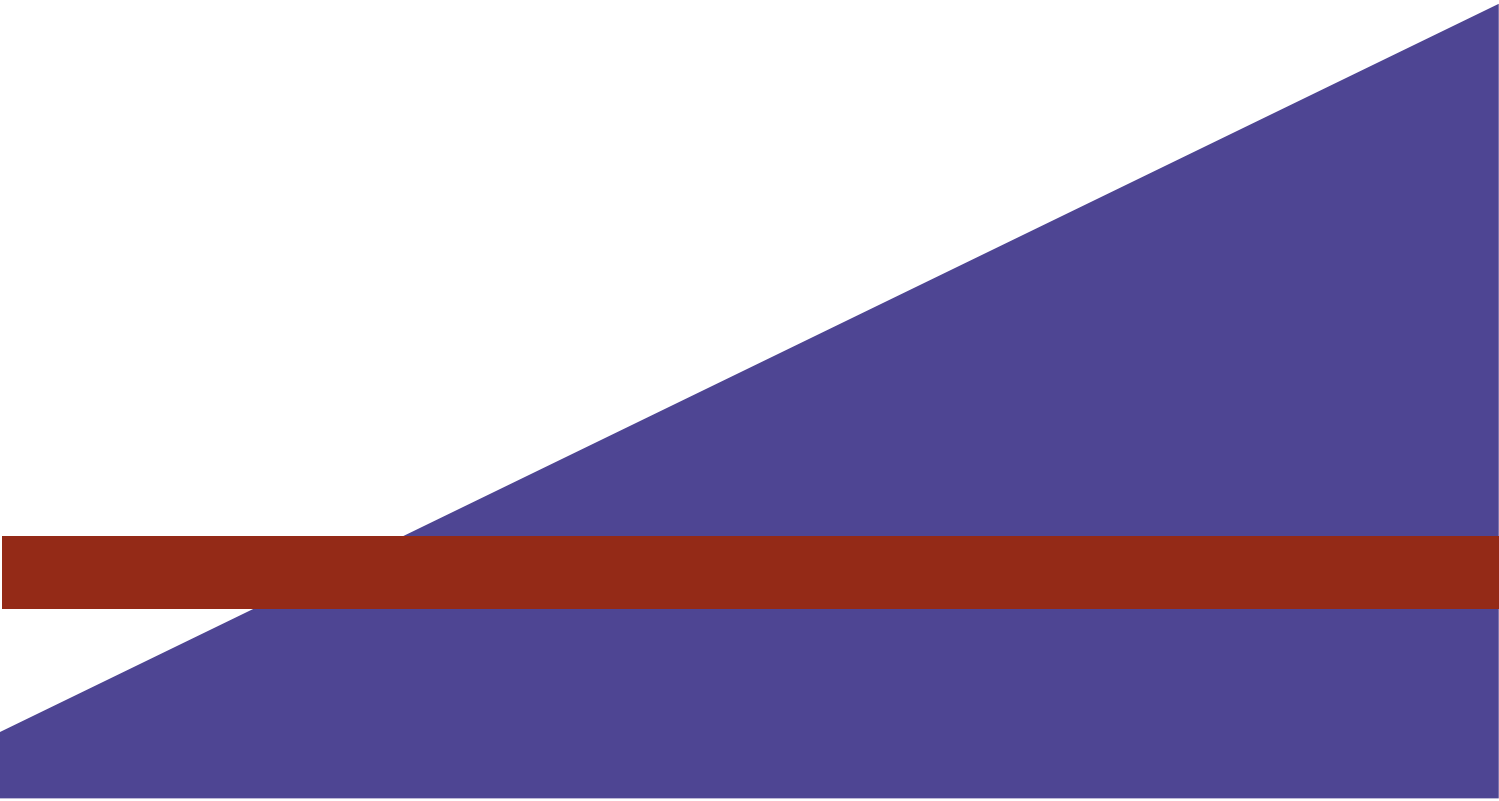




# 2025 Annual EPIQ Conference

Feb 8–10 • Montréal, QC



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We are thrilled you have joined us for the **2025 Annual Neonatal Evidence-based Practice for Improving Quality (EPIQ) Conference** at Hôtel Bonaventure in Montréal, Québec!

EPIQ is a collaborative project between hospitals Canada-wide and abroad who are working together to share knowledge and improve outcomes of babies born less than 29 weeks of gestational age. The conference brings together neonatal-perinatal professionals from around the world to share new information and collaborate on quality improvement initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for babies and families. It is also a national forum for multi-disciplinary teams from every NICU in Canada to meet annually, benchmark their progress, share experiences, and plan future initiatives. The conference aims to foster communication among clinicians, administrators, parent-partners, researchers, trainees, network members, data abstractors, and many more who are involved in managing and improving the health and well-being of babies born prematurely.

Renowned speakers will provide thought-provoking interactive sessions. Our parent-partners will provide their invaluable perspectives as we strive to integrate them in quality improvement activities in the NICUs. Investigators will present research proposals and provide updates on a number of ongoing research initiatives. There will be plenty of opportunities for discussions in the form of plenary sessions, discussions, breakout sessions, and business meetings. Welcome, and enjoy your time at the 2025 EPIQ Conference.

Sincerely,



**Marc Beltempo**  
CNN Director



**Amit Mukerji**  
CNN Associate Director



**Prakesh Shah**  
Director of CPTBN



**Joseph Ting**  
EPIQ Associate Director



## Overall Program Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- 1. Identify strategies, counseling, and quality improvement (QI) initiatives** in improving outcomes of extremely preterm neonates within the six major outcome themes: Lung Health, Brain Health, Gut Health, Hemodynamics, Infection Prevention, and Preterm Birth.
- 2. Compare new information and collaborate with multidisciplinary teams** from tertiary NICUs across Canada on QI initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for neonates and families.
- 3. Implement parent QI initiatives and boost family engagement** in their respective NICUs to enhance parental involvement in the care process and incorporate their perspectives for improved neonatal care outcomes.

## Statement of Care

We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive environment at the EPIQ conference that fosters respectful discussions of diverse opinions and perspectives. We value our collective, unique experiences and ask that each of us enters this space with an openness to listen and willingness to learn.

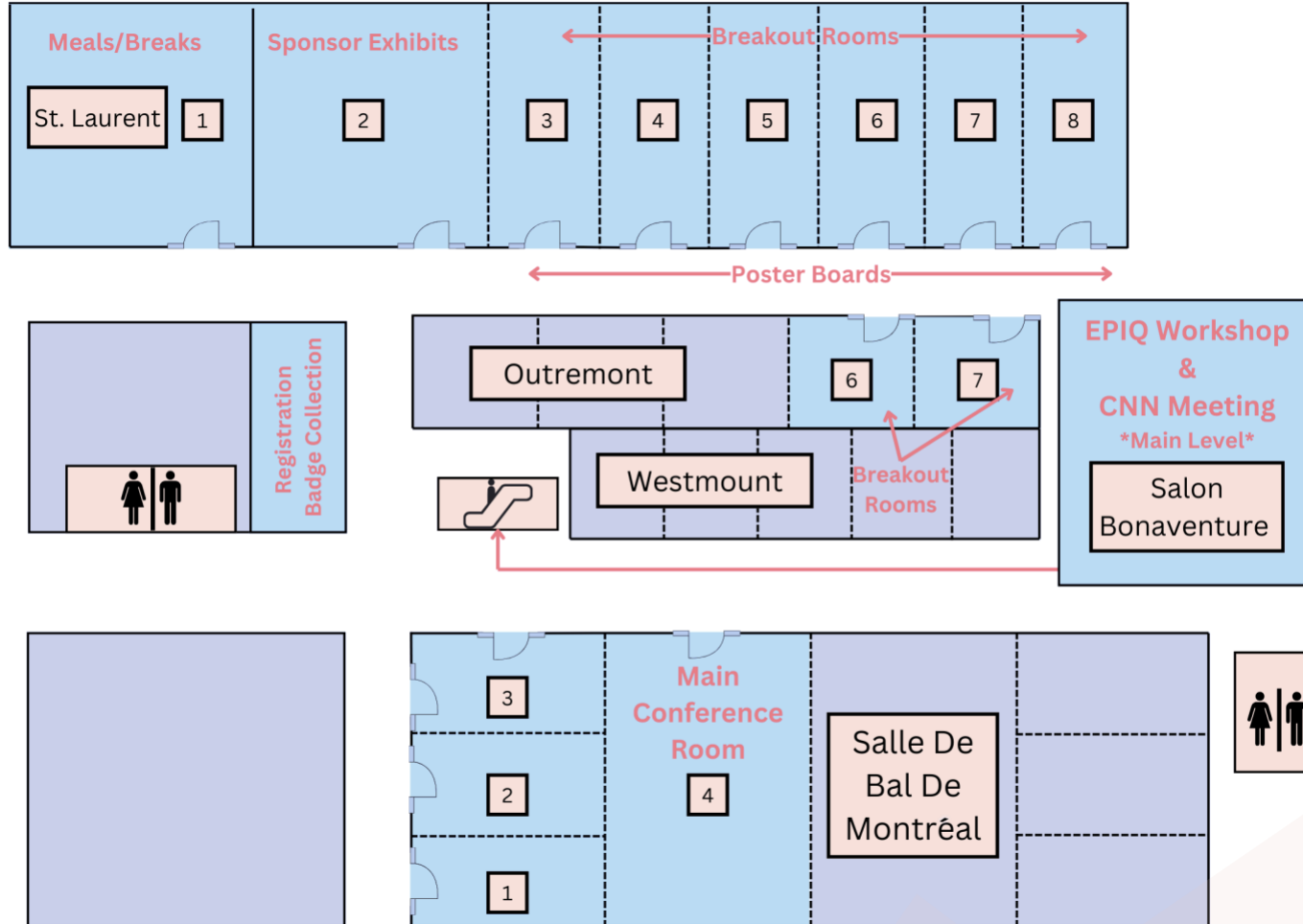
## Agenda

Saturday, February 8			
1500 – 1545	Welcome Reception & Registration		Foyer
1545 – 1600	Opening Remarks	Marc Beltempo, Joseph Ting	Montréal 1–2–3–4
1600 – 1615	EPIQ Report Participants will be able to analyze and assess the overall impact of QI of neonates in Canada, as well as evaluate the annual progress made.	Marc Beltempo	
1615 – 1700	Partnering with Families to create “EPIQ” Quality and Outcomes Participants will be able to: define family-partnered health care and discuss the evidence for its value in neonatal health care quality and safety; describe several approaches to establishing effective partnerships with neonatal families; and identify practical next steps to strengthen your QI processes and measures informed by partnering with families.	Linda Franck	
1700 – 1715	NICU Parent Lived Experience Participants will be able to describe and identify parental views on quality of care provided to newborns.	Priyanka Kumar, Anthony Lucifero	
1715 – 1730	1–Minute Elevator Pitches   <b>Brain Health and Golden Hour</b>	Moderators:	

1730 – 1800	<b>Poster Presentation Session</b> Participants will be able to (a) evaluate various QI activities occurring nationally in brain health newborn care through a one-minute “pitch” and poster presentation session focused on QI activity at their site, specifying their health outcome and one PDSA cycle; (b) identify from presenters as to what aspects of the program worked and what were the challenges in implementation of the program.	Eugene Ng, Ipsita Goswami	
1845 – 1945	<b>Dinner</b>		<b>Montréal 1–2–3–4</b>
1915 – 2015	<b>Evidence to Influence: Making a Difference for Children Through Health Research</b> Participants will be able to: translate child health research findings into actionable strategies that can influence healthcare policies and improve clinical practices, using children’s pain management as an example; examine how partnerships across disciplines and sectors enhance the mobilization of research evidence into meaningful health outcomes for children and families; and discuss the critical role of research funders in shaping priorities, supporting knowledge mobilization efforts, and fostering innovation to maximize the impact of child health research.	Christine Chambers	<b>Montréal 1–2–3–4</b>
<b>Sunday, February 9</b>			
0700 – 0800	<b>Breakfast</b>		<b>St-Laurent 1</b>
0800 – 0845	<b>Partnering with Families to create “EPIQ” Quality and Outcomes</b> Participants will be able to: define family-partnered health care and discuss the evidence for its value in neonatal health care quality and safety; describe several approaches to establishing effective partnerships with neonatal families; identify practical next steps to strengthen your QI processes and measures informed by partnering with families.	Tom Wiebe, Linda Franck, Leah Whitehead, Karel O’Brien	<b>Montréal 1–2–3–4</b>
0845 – 0900	<b>NICU Parent Lived Experience</b> Participants will be able to describe and identify parental views on quality of care provided to newborns.	Ashley Durance, Miroslav Stavel	
0900 – 0915	<b>1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Lung Health</b>	Moderators: Brooke Read, Amit Mukerji	
0915 – 0945	<b>Poster Presentation Session</b> Participants will be able to (a) evaluate various QI activities occurring nationally in lung health newborn care through a one-minute “pitch” and poster presentation session focused on QI activity at their site, specifying their health outcome and one PDSA cycle; (b) identify from presenters as to what aspects of the program worked and what were the challenges in implementation of the program.		
0945 – 1015	<b>Morning Break</b>		<b>St-Laurent 1</b>
1015 – 1100	<b>Probiotics in Canada: What is evidence and where do we go?</b> Participants will be able to: review results of probiotics administration and outcomes in Canada; learn beneficial effects of probiotics in preterm neonates; and understand unknowns of probiotics in preterm neonates and need for further information.	Prakesh Shah, Belal Alshaikh, Keith Barrington	<b>Montréal 1–2–3–4</b>
1100 – 1115	<b>1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Gut Health</b>	Moderators: Ali McBryde, Belal Alshaikh	
1115 – 1145	<b>Poster Presentation Session</b>		

	Participants will be able to (a) evaluate various QI activities occurring nationally in gut health newborn care through a one-minute “pitch” and poster presentation session focused on QI activity at their site, specifying their health outcome and one PDSA cycle; (b) identify from presenters as to what aspects of the program worked and what were the challenges in implementation of the program.		
1130 – 1230	Lunch		St-Laurent 1
1230 – 1300	<b>Preterm Prelabor Membrane Rupture: choosing the right antibiotics</b> Participants will be able to: describe the efficacy of various antibiotic regimens in improving overall maternal and neonatal outcomes, including the reduction of neonatal sepsis, respiratory complications, and long-term neurodevelopmental outcomes associated with preterm prelabor rupture of membranes (PPROM; assess the validity of the symptoms of chorioamnionitis in the context of PPROM; and analyze antibiotic resistance patterns in maternal and neonatal sepsis, in cases with or without PROM.	Isabelle Boucoiran	Montréal 1-2-3-4
1300-1315	<b>NICU Parent Lived Experience</b> Participants will be able to describe and identify parental views on quality of care provided to newborns.	Meredith Harrison	
1315 – 1330	<b>1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Preterm Birth and Hemodynamics</b>	Moderators: Sarah McDonald, Souvik Mitra	
1330 – 1400	<b>Poster Presentation Session</b> Participants will be able to (a) evaluate various QI activities occurring nationally in newborn care through a one-minute “pitch” and poster presentation session focused on QI activity at their site, specifying their health outcome and one PDSA cycle; (b) identify from presenters as to what aspects of the program worked and what were the challenges in implementation of the program.		
1400 – 1600	<b>Lung Health   Brain Health   Gut Health   Infection Prevention   Hemodynamics   Preterm Birth   CNFUN   Family Engagement</b> Participants will be able to apply, select or design various ways of delivering improved care to newborns. Participants will have the opportunity to attend 1 of the 8 group sessions: Lung Health, Brain Health, Gut Health, Infection Prevention, Hemodynamics, Preterm birth management before birth, Neonatal Follow-up Network group, and Family Engagement group.	Breakout Sessions	St-Laurent 4-5-6-7-8 Outremont 6-7 Salon Bonaventure
1600 – 1630	Afternoon Break		St-Laurent 1
1630 – 1715	<b>The Ductus Dilemma: Navigating Controversies in PDA Management in Premature Newborns</b> Participants will be able to review the evidence supporting different approaches to PDA management; discuss the results of trials and how they may or not be applicable to some of our populations; examine the clinical decision-making process in selecting individualized treatment strategies regarding the PDA, considering the benefits and risks of each approach.	Amish Jain, Gabriel Altit, Souvik Mitra	Montréal 1-2-3-4
1715 – 1730	<b>EPIQ in Micro-preemies</b> Participants will be able to: understand unique situations in micropreemies; and understand how CNN/EPIQ are addressing the challenges.	Joseph Ting	
1730 – 1745	<b>From knowledge to clinical practice: using an implementation science approach for integrating best practices into neonatal follow-up in Canada</b> Participants will be able to: understand basic concepts in implementation science; become familiar with common frameworks used in implementation science.	Thuy Mai Luu	

1830 – 1930	Canadian Neonatal Foundation Charity Event Dinner – Ticket Required ( <b>unaccredited</b> )		Montréal 1–2–3–4
Monday, February 10			
0700 – 0800	Breakfast		St-Laurent 1
0800 – 0810	<b>EPIQ Education Program Update: Past, Present, and Future</b> Participants will be able to: understand the progress and impact of the Evidence-based Practice in Improving Quality program.	Jehier Afifi, Sandesh Shivananda	Montréal 1–2–3–4
0810 – 0830	<b>Lung Health Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Brooke Read, Amit Mukerji	
0830 – 0850	<b>Brain Health Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Eugene Ng, Ipsita Goswami	
0850 – 0910	<b>Gut Health Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Ali McBryde, Belal Alshaikh	
0910 – 0930	<b>Infection Prevention Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Claire Hamilton, Joseph Ting	
0930 – 0945	<b>1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Infection Prevention &amp; Antimicrobial Stewardship</b>	Moderators: Claire Hamilton, Joseph Ting	
0945 – 1015	<b>Poster Presentation Session</b> Participants will be able to (a) evaluate various QI activities occurring nationally in infection prevention in newborn care through a one-minute “pitch” and poster presentation session focused on QI activity at their site, specifying their health outcome and one PDSA cycle; (b) identify from presenters as to what aspects of the program worked and what were the challenges in implementation of the program.		
1015 – 1045	Morning Break		St-Laurent 1
1045 – 1105	<b>Family Engagement Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Fabiana Bacchini	Montréal 1–2–3–4
1105 – 1125	<b>Hemodynamics Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Amish Jain, Souvik Mitra	Montréal 1–2–3–4
1125 – 1145	<b>Preterm Birth Outcome Group Presentation</b>	Sarah McDonald	
1145 – 1215	<b>Next Steps – CER Future Topics and Ideas Live Poll Session</b> Participants will be able to recommend future topics and ideas related to comparative effectiveness research (CER); highlight opportunities for nationwide engagement; and focus on grant writing, collaborative project planning and execution.	Marc Beltempo	



# Elevator Pitches & Poster Presentations

Saturday, February 8

Session	Time	Poster ID	Presenter	Elevator Pitch Order (Live)	Poster Title
Brain Health & Golden Hour	1715 – 1800	BH 1	HSCC	1	'IT'S NOT COOL TO BE COLD' QI Initiative to Decrease Hypothermia in Infants 29 wks
		BH 2	FMC	2	"The Real Micropreemies of FMC NICU" 23 – 24 week GA Care Pathway
		BH 3	FMC	3	"Hot" Couture: Maintaining Normothermia in the Delivery Room and on Admission
		BH 4	RCH	4	Amalka's Cocoon: Improving Developmentally-Supportive Care in a Canadian NICU
		BH 5	SEHC	5 (Live)	Ensuring Accuracy In Delivery Room Resuscitation A Birth Record Initiative
		BH 6	Parent-Partner	-	FICare: It's All About Family
		BH 7	MSH	6 (Live)	Improving Access to Early Intervention in Preterm Infants: A Quality Improvement Initiative
		BH 8	TOH	7	Improving Admission Temperature in Babies $\geq 340$ weeks' Gestation: A Quality Improvement Project
		BH 9	SMH	8	Patient Experience with Retinopathy of Prematurity Exams in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit – A Quality Improvement Initiative
		BH 10	SBGH	9	Reducing Cold Stress in the NICU: A Quality Improvement Project
		BH 11	IWK	10	Reducing Time to First Skin-to-Skin Care in the NICU
		BH 12	Parent-Partner	11	The Power of the Journey Map: Harnessing Family Advisors' Insights to Transition Future NICU Experiences

		BH 13	RUH	12	Tiny Tot Team
		BH 14	SUNY	13	POKE-ing Wisely
Sunday, February 9					
Lung Health	0900 – 0945	LH 1	CHEO	1	A Quality Improvement Initiative Reduces Opioid Exposure in Post –Operative and Mechanically Ventilated Neonates
		LH 2	KGH	2	Advancing Neonatal Care: Practice Changes in Respiratory Support at KHSC
		LH 3	TOH	3	Assessing the Introduction of MIST
		LH 4	WRH	4	Comparative Effectiveness of Less Invasive Surfactant Administration (LISA) vs. Intubation Surfactant Extubation (InSurE) in Managing Respiratory Distress Syndrome in Preterm Infants : A Five–Year Experience at Windsor Regional Hospital
		LH 5	BCWH	5	Enhancing Consistent Care for High–Risk Infants: Innovative Multidisciplinary BPD Rounds
		LH 6	CHUQ	6 (Live)	Impact of Respiratory Care Bundle on Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia and Pulmonary Hypertension in Preterm Infants
		LH 7	KNN	7	Minimizing the Duration of Invasive Mechanical Ventilation
		LH 8	RAH	8	Neonatal Home Support Team
		LH 9	HSCC	9	Quality Initiative: Standardization of Oxygen Saturation Goals & Nursing Interventions in NICU
		LH 10	FMC	10 (Live)	Still Missing the Bulls eye: DART Protocol Did Not Change Practitioner Behavior in Prescribing Dexamethasone to Facilitate Extubation in Extremely Preterm Infants
		LH 11	RQHR	11	Unplanned Extubation in the NICU: an Ongoing QI Project

Gut Health	1100 – 1115	GH 1	SUNY	1	Advancing Novice Nurse Competency and Building Team Culture Through Mentorship: A NICU Initiative
		GH 2	MUHC	2	Broadening Skin-to-Skin (SSC) criteria in a Canadian Quaternary Care NICU
		GH 3	LHSC	3	ELGA Care Team: An Update
		GH 4	CBRH	4 (Live)	Evaluation of an Electronic Resuscitation Record
		GH 5	Parent-Partner	5	Hope & Strength: Paying it Forward for NICU Parents
		GH 6	HSC	6	Implementation of got milk Rounds to Promote Breastmilk at Discharge in an Outborn Children's Hospital NICU
		GH 7	RAH	7	Improving Enteral and Oral Nutrition Outcomes in Neonates With Critical Congenital Heart Disease
		GH 8	HSJ	8 (Live)	Prenatal Education And Support Groups For Parents Whose Baby Will Come To The Nicu: Why And How To Do It?
		GH 9	JGH	9	Prevention of Necrotizing Enterocolitis: "We gut this!"
		GH 10	Parent-Partner	–	Results of the pilot project of a new inter-institutional program aimed at improving accessibility to breast pumps for mothers of premature babies
		GH 11	CHUS	10	Standardization of OIT care at CIUSSSE-CHUS
Preterm Birth & Hemodynamics	1315 – 1400	PTB 1	HSJ	1	A Less Interventionist Approach for Prenatally Suspected Coarctation of the Aorta: Insights from a level 3 NICU
		PTB 2	Parent-Partner	2	Enhancing Support Through Peer Led Programs
		PTB 3	SMH	3	Family Integrated Care [FICare]: Improving Parent Presence in the NICU
		PTB 4	Parent-Partner	–	Findings of The First Year of Our New Family Council At BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre

		PTB 5	Parent-Partner	4 (Live)	Healing Together: The Impact of Family to Family Support in Challenging Times
		PTB 6	Parent-Partner	-	Parent Partners at KHSC
		PTB 7	UBC	-	START [Stabilization and Support During Transition] Project: A review of current best practices in preterm infants (<32 weeks) in the first 6 hours of life
		PTB 8	MSH	5	Real-world impact of routine screening and early targeted PDA treatment approach on intraventricular hemorrhage in extremely low gestational age neonates: A single-center pre-post cohort study
		PTB 9	Parent-Partner	6	Sister of Two Preemies
		PTB 10	HSJ	7 (Live)	Small Wins For Small Babies: A Program Celebrating Babies' Successes Helps Parents Cope With Neonatal Hospitalization
		PTB 11	Parent-Partner	-	The Impact of a Positive NICU Experience: How Family Integrated Care laid the foundation for a parent partner program
		PTB 12	Parent-Partner	8 (Live)	Veteran NICU Parent Support Worker
		PTB 13	JCHC	9	Preemie Progress: What's new at the Janeway NICU

Monday, February 10

Infection Prevention	0930 – 1015	IP 1	GVS	1	A Practical Approach For The Prevention Of Central Line Associated Bloodstream Infections (Clabsi): A Quality Improvement Initiative
		IP 2	JGH	-	Antibiotics stewardship at the Jewish General Hospital
		IP 3	ACH	2	Antimicrobial Stewardship Practices for Infants with HIE: A Quality Improvement Initiative
		IP 4	CHEO	3	Antimicrobial Stewardship Program in NICU: Lessons Learned

		IP 5	HHSC	4	Blood Culture QI Project in the NICU
		IP 6	BCWH	5	Comparison of Cleaning Methods for Reusable Breast Pump Kits in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
		IP 7	SBGH	6	Glow, Scrub, Shine: Illuminating Handwashing Quality in the NICU
		IP 8	MSH	7 (Live)	Implementation of a New PICC Dressing to Decrease PICC-related Infections in the NICU
		IP 9	KNN	8	Minimizing Central Line Insertion and its Duration
		IP 10	CHUS	9	Preventing CLABSI by standardizing our practice: a CHUS experience
		IP 11	IWK	10	Preventing CLABSI in NICU: Drive to Zero
		IP 12	MSH	11 (Live)	The Impact of a Standardized Monitoring and Management Algorithm on Care Practices for Late-Onset Sepsis and Septic Shock in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

## Committee Meeting and Breakout Room Locations

Committee Meeting	Date	Time	Location
EPIQ Steering Committee	Sunday, February 9	0700 – 0800	Outremont 6
CPTBN Steering Committee	Monday, February 10	0700 – 0800	Outremont 6
Breakout Session	Date	Time	Location
Brain Health Outcome Group	Sunday, February 9	1400 – 1600	Salon Bonaventure
Hemodynamics Outcome Group			St-Laurent 4
Family Engagement Group			St-Laurent 5
CNFUN			St-Laurent 6
Lung Health Outcome Group			St-Laurent 7
Infection Prevention Outcome Group			St-Laurent 8
CPTBN			Outremont 6
Gut Health Outcome Group			Outremont 7

# 2025 EPIQ Conference Speakers

## Keynote Speaker

Christine T. Chambers (PhD, RPsych, FRSC, FCAHS)



**Dr. Christine Chambers** is an international leader in children's pain research and a national voice for children's health. Twice named one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women by the Women's Executive Network, Christine has published over 200 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals and is recognized in the top 2% of the most cited scientists in the world. She is a Professor and Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Children's Pain at Dalhousie University and faculty member in the Centre for Pediatric Pain Research at IWK Health Centre.

Her acclaimed research program has helped establish Canada as a leader in children's pain research, launching award-winning projects including #ItDoesntHaveToHurt and mentoring over 100 trainees. Christine is the Scientific Director of Solutions for Kids in Pain (SKIP), and the Scientific Director of the Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH) at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

## Clinical Practice Speakers



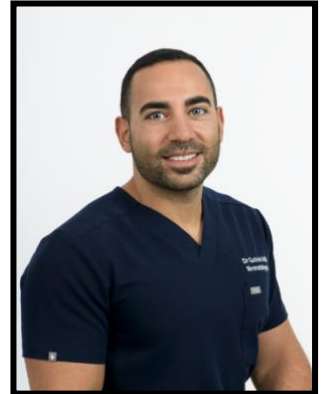
**Dr. Jehier Afifi** is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Dalhousie University and Neonatologist at IWK Health and Nova Scotia Provincial Perinatal Follow Up Program. Dr Afifi holds leadership roles in safety & quality locally, nationally, and internationally. She is the Chair of EPIQ Education Program Steering Committee and Co-Director of CNFUN. She is also the QI lead of Newborn Brain Society QI & Research Committee, and member of Brain Health Canada, POCUSNEO and Neonatal Neurocritical Care Accreditation (AFC).

Her research area focuses on quality improvement, brain health, AI in risk prediction models and neurodevelopmental outcomes of high-risk infants, but extends to involve clinical interventions and family integrated care. Dr. Afifi's clinical research and publications are interdisciplinary, collaborating with families, perinatology, neuroradiology, neurosurgery and geared both to contribute to the academic literature and to improve outcomes of newborn infants and parental experiences.

**Dr. Belal Alshaikh** trained in Newborn Critical Care at the University of Calgary and completed his Research Fellowship in Nutrition and Gastroenterology at the Children Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and University of Pennsylvania. In addition to his training in Newborn Critical care, Dr Alshaikh completed a master degree in Clinical Epidemiology at the University of Calgary. He is currently a Staff Neonatologist and Medical Director of the NICU at South Health Campus in Calgary, and a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Calgary. Dr. Alshaikh Co-Chairs the Canadian Neonatal Gut Health of EPIQ and is a founder of the Society of the Neonatal Nutrition Gut and Growth. Dr. Alshaikh is a member of the Gastroenterology and Nutrition Committee of the Canadian Pediatric Society.



**Dr. Gabriel Altit** completed his medical school at McGill University, followed by his Pediatric and Neonatology residencies at Université de Montréal. He pursued his training at McGill (Montreal Children's Hospital [MUHC]) in echocardiography scanning. Following that, he did a post-doctoral research training in the pediatric ECHO laboratory at Stanford University. He completed an MSc in Epidemiology at McGill (2017–2020). He joined McGill University and the Montreal Children's Hospital as a Neonatologist in October 2017. Since his appointment as a clinician-scientist at the MUHC-RI, he has created the NeoCardioLab ([www.neocardiolab.com](http://www.neocardiolab.com)).



In 2020, he launched the Neonatal Hemodynamics Clinical Research Fellowship at McGill, for which he is the program director, with ECHO techniques applied to research questions. Further, the NeoCardioLab application is now available on iPhone, iPad and Android. It offers numerous educational resources and is used by experts in the field daily, throughout the world.

**Dr. Keith Barrington** completed his medical training at the University of Liverpool in the UK before moving to Canada to take up a neonatal fellowship in Edmonton Alberta in 2008. Since then he has held several university posts and has served as Chair of the Fetus and Newborn Committee of the Canadian Pediatric Society and of the Society of Neonatologists of Quebec.



His research interests include apnea and respiratory control, cardiovascular adaptations and circulatory support, and ethical decision making. He has recently been investigating the development of the neonatal microbiome and the role of probiotics in preventing serious intestinal diseases.

**Dr. Isabelle Boucoiran** is a Clinical Associate Professor at Université de Montréal (UdeM, Canada). She graduated at the University of Nice–Sophia Antipolis (France) and completed a maternal–fetal medicine fellowship at UdeM and a fellowship in reproductive infectious diseases at the University of British–Columbia as well as a master's degree in clinical research. She is a mid-career clinician–scientist at the School of Public Health of UdeM and the obstetrics and gynecology department of the CHU Sainte–Justine, where she is co-director of the Women and Children Infectious Disease Centre (CIME).



Her main area of research is the diagnosis, management, and prevention of infections in pregnancy, with a focus on HIV, CMV and chorioamnionitis/preterm prelabor membrane rupture.



**Professor Linda S. Franck** holds the Jack and Elaine Koehn Endowed Chair in Pediatric Nursing at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), School of Nursing, where she directs the ACTIONS fellowship program in reproductive health and justice. She holds a secondary appointment in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences and is an affiliate member of the Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health. She also serves as the founding director of the Ronald McDonald House Charities Center at UCSF, established in 2022 with the aim of contributing new evidence and facilitating the implementation of pediatric family-centered care and family-centered services in all settings where children receive health care globally.



**Dr. Amish Jain** completed his medical education in India, pediatric residency in the UK and neonatal clinical fellowship in the University of Toronto before joining Mount Sinai Hospital as Staff Neonatologist in 2011; where he works as a staff neonatologist and clinician scientist at the Sinai Health System/Tanenbaum-Lunenfeld Research Institute and as an Assistant Professor in Pediatrics at the University of Toronto. He is also the site Director of the Targeted Neonatal Echocardiography Program in the NICU at Mount Sinai Hospital, which he co-founded in the year 2011. During this time Dr. Jain also completed a PhD in Cardiovascular Physiology under the Department of Physiology at University of Toronto.

Dr. Jain's specific research interests are in the field of critical care, neonatal cardio-pulmonary physiology and functional echocardiography, particularly in the assessment and management of pulmonary hypertension and right ventricular function in neonates. Dr. Jain currently holds the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) and SickKids Foundation's (SKF) New Investigator Research Grant for the study of chronic pulmonary hypertension in preterm neonates as well as an Investigator Initiated Research Grant from Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals for establishing a Canadian national database for preterm neonates exposed to inhaled nitric oxide during NICU stay. Over the last 6 years, Dr. Jain has established himself as a content expert, independent researcher and an emerging leader of national and international prominence in the field of neonatal cardio-pulmonary physiology.



**Dr. Thuy Mai Luu** is a pediatrician and received her MD from McGill University ('01) and pediatric degree from Université de Montréal ('06). She then pursued her training at Brown University to gain clinical and research knowledge in developmental follow-up of high-risk newborns. Dr. Luu has also completed a master degree in epidemiology and biostatistics at McGill University. Currently, she is the medical director of CHU Sainte-Justine Neonatal Follow-Up Program in Montreal; the director of the Canadian Neonatal Follow-Up Network; and a senior clinical research scholar from the Quebec Health Research Funds.

Her research focuses on long-term neurodevelopmental and physical health outcomes following preterm birth, from infancy to adulthood, looking at risk and resiliency factors along with best screening strategies to enhance clinical follow-up.

**Dr. Souvik Mitra** is a staff Neonatologist at the BC Women's Hospital, Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of British Columbia and Clinician-Scientist at the BC Children's Hospital Research Institute, Vancouver, Canada. He completed his fellowship in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine and MSc in Clinical Epidemiology from McMaster University and his PhD in Epidemiology and Applied Health Research from Dalhousie University. He is the Chair of the Fetus and Newborn Committee of the Canadian Pediatric Society, member of the Institute Advisory Board, Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH) and the College of Reviewers, CIHR. He also serves as an Associate Editor for the Cochrane Neonatal Group.



His primary research interests revolve around improving patient and family-important clinical outcomes of extremely preterm babies. His current CIHR-funded research projects include a pan-Canadian study on the comparative effectiveness of NSAIDs for treatment of patent ductus arteriosus in extremely preterm infants and a multicenter RCT on selective early treatment of the PDA in extremely low gestational age infants.

**Dr. Karel O'Brien** is a Professor of Paediatrics at the University of Toronto. She is a clinical teacher and neonatologist at a perinatal center that specializes in fetal diagnosis and therapy and also works in the follow up clinic. Dr. O'Brien has been instrumental in the development of Family Integrated Care (FiCare), a model that changes how we deliver care to families in the NICU and led the International cRCT to assess its effectiveness. She has continued to grow this program of research and implementation, hosting International FiCare conferences, developing a FiCare website ([familyintegratedcare.com](http://familyintegratedcare.com)) and collaborating in international FiCare research.



**Dr. Prakesh Shah** is the Pediatrician-in-Chief at Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto and Professor in the Department of Pediatrics and Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto, Canada. He has led the Canadian Neonatal network as Associate Director between 2010-12 and then was Director of CNN from 2012-2024. Currently, he is the Director of the Canadian Preterm Birth Network (CPTBN) and an International Network for Evaluation of Outcomes of Neonates (iNeo) whereby he oversees a project of benchmarking outcomes of very preterm neonates in 11 countries with population-level neonatal networks with an overarching aim of improving quality of care across 240 NICUs.

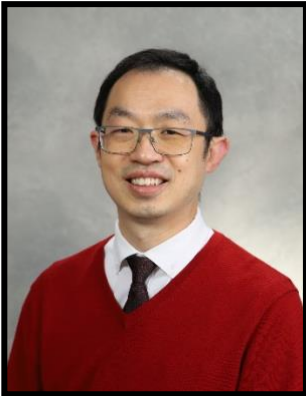


Dr. Shah's areas of interest include Patient and Disease oriented research in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, Health Services and Epidemiological Research in Maternal-Newborn care, Knowledge Synthesis and Quality improvement. He has evaluated and produced policy documents on interventions and programs for preterm birth for provincial and national agencies. He is engaged in policy and advocacy work with his role in executive committees and advisory board membership as local, provincial, national, and international levels.



**Dr. Sandesh Shivananda** is a neonatologist, health informatician and Quality lead at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. His focus is on identifying gaps in care delivery and implementing solutions in real-world setting to improve outcomes.

Dr. Shivananda has researched and published on (i) innovative care delivery models, (ii) clinical decision support products at the point of care, (iii) implementing care bundles and (iv) health technology integration in various neonatal settings. During his career, he has mentored many junior faculty members across Canada, fellows, and graduate students. He brings the knowledge and experience from the fields of neonatology, informatics, improvement science, organizational leadership, innovation, and team behaviors to facilitate excellence in care delivery, practice adaptation and implementation in a given contextual setting.



**Dr. Joseph Ting** is the endowed Variety, the Children's Charity and the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation Pediatric Clinical Research Professor at Division of Neonatal-Perinatal Care, Department of Pediatrics, University of Alberta. He currently serves as a member of the Executive Committee and the Annual Report Review Committee of the Canadian Neonatal Network. He has been nominated as the Associate Director and Co-Chair of the Infection Prevention and Antimicrobial Stewardship Group within the Evidence-Based Practice for Improving Quality (EPIQ) initiative.

His primary areas of research interest include (1) neonatal infection and antimicrobial stewardship, (2) neonatal hemodynamics and Targeted Neonatal Echocardiography, and (3) long-term health outcomes for at-risk infants. Throughout his clinical and research career, he has maintained a prolific research output, contributing to over 140 peer-reviewed publications and three book chapters. Over the next decade, his goal is to improve newborn care in Canada and around the world through clinical research, education, and advocacy.

## Parent-Partner Speakers



**Ashley Durance** was born and raised in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia. She became a mother in 2016 to her 23 weeker, Hazel and after 175 days in the NICU at Royal Columbian she realized the power of a positive NICU experience and FICare, which inspired her to continue advocating for parents and preemies. Working in the aviation field she slowly became involved in speaking engagements and a QI project with the jet ventilator and skin to skin alongside the RT department by sharing her lived experience. After two cancer diagnoses in 2020 she left the world of aviation and became a published author of an inclusive children's book, *The Adventures of Mabel Mouse*. Ashley resides in Chilliwack, BC with her husband and daughter and is now a Parent + Family Navigator with the NICU at Royal Columbian Hospital.

**Meredith Harrison** is a parent partner on The Ottawa Hospital's Extremely Low Gestational Age (ELGA) working group for babies born under 28 weeks. She lives in Ottawa, ON with her husband and two young children, both of whom were born prematurely.



**Priyanka Kumar** is currently a senior manager at MNP in Canada working in the National Tax Group. She completed her masters in tax law at HEC and has over 10 years of experience in accounting and tax services. She is a proud mother to Massimo Kumar Lucifero who was born prematurely in December 2020 weighing at 700 grams. After three challenging years of being followed by several departments, numerous medications and several procedures, Massimo is looking well and enjoying life as a toddler. Now, Priyanka and Massimo's weekends consist of baking together, reading books and enjoying visits to the park. Priyanka also enjoys self-care time which include training for a half marathon and reading thrillers.

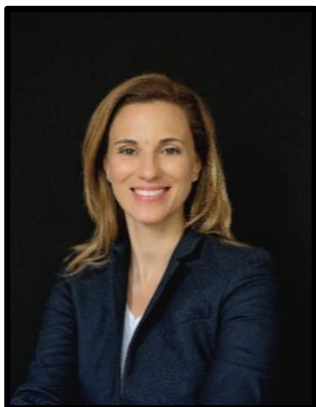


**Anthony Lucifero** is the father of Massimo Kumar Lucifero. Who was born at the gestational age of 24 weeks and 5 days, weighing 700 grams on December 29, 2020 at 3:00 AM at the Lakeshore General Hospital in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Canada. Massimo was immediately transported to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the Montreal Children's Hospital where he would spend the next six months. After undergoing numerous procedures including a balloon dilation and inserting a gastrostomy tube, Massimo was finally discharged on June 21, 2021. On September 28, 2021 during a follow up echocardiogram it was discovered that Massimo suffered from severe pulmonary hypertension. A subsequent cardiac catheterization confirmed this conclusion. After a six week admission to the Montreal Children's Hospital Massimo was discharged. The medication required to treat Massimo's pulmonary hypertension was Sildenafil, Bosentan and Remodulin. After numerous follow up echocardiograms Massimo was fully weaned off all the medication in December 2022.



**Miroslav Stavel** is a dedicated healthcare professional, and has been a valued member of Royal Columbian Hospital, specializing in Neonatology and Pediatrics and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). His election as the local department head reflects his exceptional commitment and diverse medical training. Dr. Stavel excels in forging enduring bonds with patients and families, fostering unity and shared purpose. He believes in the importance of partnership with families, and that it should be a requirement to have parent and patient partners represented formally within our health care system.





**Ms. Fabiana Bacchini** is the Executive Director of the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation. She is a journalist and the published author of *From Surviving to Thriving, a Mother's Journey Through Infertility, Loss and Miracles*. While in the NICU with her surviving twin born extremely preterm, she participated in the study of Family Integrated Care (FiCare). This led her to extensive volunteering in the NICU at Mount Sinai Hospital and to become an ambassador for FiCare, travelling across Canada and internationally to share her experience with this model of care. Her son was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, which continued to empower her to be a strong voice and advocate for premature babies and their families. She is dedicated to form connections with researchers to ensure that the viewpoints of parents are integrated into their studies. To this end, she has engaged in collaborations with numerous researchers, both in Canada and around the world, in various capacities.



**Leah Whitehead** is a Communications Specialist and dedicated NICU mom advocate, focused on transforming the healthcare experience through her lived insights and professional expertise. Over 11 years, she co-founded and developed the IWK NICU Parent Partner Program, a sustainable model that bridges families and healthcare providers. Leah guides healthcare professionals and families on language, peer support, and collaborative care; promoting a compassionate and family-centered approach. She also co-owns a First Aid, Safety, and Psychological Safety Training business, helping organizations foster safer and more supportive environments centered on both physical and mental well-being. Leah's influence extends to national neonatal research initiatives, with her collaborative work published in journals like *Archives of Disease in Childhood* and *Journal of Family Nursing*. Through her expertise and heart-led advocacy, Leah is dedicated to creating positive, lasting change in healthcare for providers and families alike.



**Mr. Tom Wiebe** is a father to a teenager who spent 118 days in the NICU as an infant. He has since returned to the Neonatal Program at BC Women's Hospital since 2018 as a Patient and Family Engagement Advisor. Mr. Wiebe lives in a tiny box in the sky by the sea in downtown Vancouver with his most wonderful wife, their son, and far too many books.

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# EPIQ Conference Agenda

08 Feb 2025 - 10 Feb 2025 | Montreal, Quebec

## Saturday February 08

1500 - 1545	Welcome Reception & Registration Room: Foyer
1545 - 1600	Opening Remarks Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1600 - 1615	EPIQ Report Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1615 - 1700	Speaker 1   Linda Franck Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1700 - 1715	NICU Parent Lived Experience Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1715 - 1730	1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Brain Health & Golden Hour Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1730 - 1800	Poster Presentation Session Room: Conference Hallway
1845 - 1945	Dinner Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1915 - 2015	Speaker 2   Christine Chambers Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4

## Monday February 10

0700 - 0800	Breakfast Room: St-Laurent 1
0800 - 0810	EPIQ Education Program Update Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0810 - 0830	Lung Health Outcome Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0830 - 0850	Brain Health Outcome Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0850 - 0910	Gut Health Outcome Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0910 - 0930	Infection Outcome Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0930 - 0945	1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Infection Prevention Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0945 - 1015	Poster Presentation Session Room: Conference Hallway
1015 - 1045	Morning Break Room: St-Laurent 1
1045 - 1105	NICU Parent-Partners Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1105 - 1125	Hemodynamics Outcome Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1125 - 1145	Preterm Birth Group Presentation Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1145 - 1215	Next Steps   CER Future Topics & Ideas Live Poll Session Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1215 - 1220	Closing Remarks Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4

## Sunday February 09

0700 - 0800	Breakfast Room: St-Laurent 1
0800 - 0845	Family Partnering   T. Wiebe, L. Franck, L. Whitehead, K. O'Brien Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0845 - 0900	NICU Parent Lived Experience Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0900 - 0915	1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Lung Health Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
0915 - 0945	Poster Presentation Session Room: Conference Hallway
0945 - 1015	Morning Break Room: St-Laurent 1
1015 - 1100	Panel for Probiotics 5.0 Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1100 - 1115	1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Gut Health Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1115 - 1145	Poster Presentation Session Room: Conference Hallway
1130 - 1230	Lunch Room: St-Laurent 1
1230 - 1300	PPROM & Antibiotics   Isabella Boucoiran Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1300 - 1315	NICU Parent Lived Experience Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1315 - 1330	1-Minute Elevator Pitches   Preterm Birth & Hemodynamics Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1330 - 1400	Poster Presentation Session Room: Conference Hallway
1400 - 1600	Outcome Group Breakout Sessions Room: St-Laurent 3-4-5-6-7-8 & Outremont 6-7
1600 - 1630	Afternoon Break Room: St-Laurent 1
1630 - 1715	PDA Treatment Debate   A. Jain, G. Altit & S. Mitra Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1715 - 1730	Tiny Baby Taskforce   J. Ting Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1730 - 1745	Life after NICU: Role of QI in Follow-Up   M. T. Luu Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4
1830 - 1930	Canadian Neonatal Foundation Charity Event Dinner Ticket Required Room: Montreal 1-2-3-4

