

EPEC[®] Pediatrics



Education in Palliative & End-of-Life Care

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC
May 17-20, 2026



Welcome



Pediatric Pain and Palliative Care Symposium Prague, Czech Republic. May 17-20, 2026



EPEC Pediatrics Europe

STEFAN FRIEDRICHSDORF, MD

I am the Elisa and Mark Stad Professor of Pediatric Pain Medicine, Palliative Care and Integrative Medicine at UCSF, where I serve as Chief of the Division and Medical Director of the Stad Center at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals. I lead one of the nation's most comprehensive pediatric pain and palliative care programs, recognized by ChildKind International and The Joint Commission. As a global educator and researcher, I have delivered over 900 lectures across six continents and published extensively in the field. I am the principal investigator of the NIH/NCI-funded multisite study on the creation, implementation and evaluation of the Pediatric Palliative Care Curriculum "Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care (EPEC)-Pediatrics" (which trained 2,500 clinicians from 126 countries) and founder of the annual Pediatric Pain Master Class. In 2024, I was named one of Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in Health."

Our Team



JOANNE WOLFE, MD, MPH

I AM THE MGB CHAIR OF PEDIATRICS AT MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL AND BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AND THE CHARLES WILDER PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS AT HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL. I AM A PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE CLINICIAN AND RUN A RESEARCH LAB FOCUSED ON EASING SUFFERING AND PROMOTING WELLBEING IN SERIOUSLY ILL CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES. I CO-FOUNDED THE MULTINATIONAL PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE RESEARCH NETWORK.



JUSTIN BAKER, MD

I AM THE CHIEF OF THE DIVISION OF QUALITY OF LIFE AND PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE AT STANFORD MEDICINE CHILDREN'S HEALTH, WHERE I ALSO DIRECT THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL (QOLA) PROGRAM AND SERVE AS AN ENDOWED PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY. I AM A PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGIST AND HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE MEDICINE PHYSICIAN. I AM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S PALLIATIVE CARE NETWORK, SUPPORTING GLOBAL COLLABORATION AND EQUITY IN CHILDREN'S PALLIATIVE CARE.



Our Team



KATEŘINA TRKOVÁ, MD

I AM A PEDIATRIC NEURO-ONCOLOGIST AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MOTOL IN PRAGUE AND A MEMBER OF THE EPEC PEDIATRICS INTERNATIONAL FACULTY. I ACTIVELY PROVIDE PRIMARY PALLIATIVE CARE TO MY PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF ILLNESS AND AM PASSIONATE ABOUT TEACHING PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE. I BELIEVE QUALITY PALLIATIVE CARE SHOULD BEGIN AT DIAGNOSIS TO SUPPORT FAMILIES THROUGH THEIR MOST CHALLENGING MOMENTS.



JONATHAN DOWNIE, MBChB

I AM A CONSULTANT IN PAEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE MEDICINE AND THE CLINICAL LEAD FOR PAEDIATRIC SUPPORTIVE AND PALLIATIVE CARE AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN, GLASGOW. I ALSO SERVE AS THE NATIONAL CLINICAL LEAD FOR SCOTLAND'S CLINICAL ADVISORY SERVICE FOR SPECIALIST PAEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE. I AM CHAIR OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PAEDIATRICS AND CHILD HEALTH CLINICAL SPECIALTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PAEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE MEDICINE AND ACT AS SPECIALIST ADVISOR IN PAEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE MEDICINE TO THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FOR THE NATIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE STRATEGY.

Our Team



**STACY REMKE, MSW, LICSW,
APHSW-C**

I AM A CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER WITH 29 YEARS PRACTICE EXPERIENCE IN PEDIATRIC HOSPICE, PALLIATIVE CARE AND SERIOUS ILLNESS CARE. AFTER TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK FOR 15 YEARS, I HAVE RECENTLY BECOME A CONSULTANT IN PALLIATIVE CARE TRAINING, EDUCATION AND CLINICAL SUPERVISION WHERE I CONTINUE TO PROMOTE BETTER CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS AND THEIR FAMILIES WORLDWIDE. AS THE POET JAMES BALDWIN SAID, "THE CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS OURS, EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM.."



HANS-ULRICH BENDER, MD

I AM A PEDIATRICIAN AND PALLIATIVE CARE PHYSICIAN WHO GREW UP IN SOUTHERN GERMANY. MY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND IS QUITE DIVERSE: I STARTED OUT AS A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN, THEN TRAINED AS A PEDIATRICIAN, PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGIST, AND FINALLY PALLIATIVE CARE PHYSICIAN. MEANWHILE I LIVE WITH MY FAMILY IN SWITZERLAND, IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND. I WORK AS A PEDIATRICIAN IN PRIVATE PRACTICE AND AS A PALLIATIVE CARE PHYSICIAN AT THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN BERNE. MY MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST IN PALLIATIVE CARE ARE TEACHING AND COMMUNICATION.

Our Team



JULIA DOWNING, PHD, RGN

I AM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S PALLIATIVE CARE NETWORK AND HAVE WORKED INTERNATIONALLY FOR 25 YEARS. I AM A PALLIATIVE CARE NURSE, PROFESSOR, ADVOCATE, EDUCATIONALIST AND RESEARCHER AND BELIEVE THAT ALL CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO CPC, AND THAT WE MUST REDUCE THE INEQUITY IN ACCESS THAT IS SEEN GLOBALLY. EDUCATION IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS, AND WE NEED TO HAVE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES TAILORED TO DIFFERENT CONTEXTS, RESOURCES ETC THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL. I HAVE DEVELOPED EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AT ALL LEVELS INCLUDING UNDERGRADUATE, CPD, POSTGRADUATE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD



HERMIONE ANDREJEVIC, MD

I AM A CONSULTANT GENERAL PEDIATRICIAN WITH A SPECIAL INTEREST IN PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE. I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR STARTING THE PEDIATRIC OUTREACH SERVICE FOR CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX MEDICAL ILLNESSES MANY YEARS AGO. I HAVE A BACKGROUND IN GENERAL PEDIATRICS NEONATOLOGY PEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE AND PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY. I HOLD A DIPLOMA AND MASTERS DEGREE IN PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE MEDICINE FROM CARDIFF UNIVERSITY. I WAS INVOLVED IN STARTING AND DEVELOPING THE PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICE FOR ALL CHILDREN WITH LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES IN MALTA. I WAS ALSO THE ORGANIZER OF THE FIRST AND SECOND PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE CONFERENCES IN MALTA.

Our Team



JOE EL KHOURY, MD

I AM A FAMILY PHYSICIAN SPECIALIZED IN PALLIATIVE CARE, WITH TRAINING ACROSS LEBANON, THE UNITED STATES, AND FRANCE. MY WORK FOCUSES ON IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE OF SERIOUS ILLNESS FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES BY COMBINING CLINICAL CARE, EDUCATION, AND SYSTEM ORGANIZATION. I CURRENTLY LEAD THE PALLIATIVE CARE DEPARTMENT AT THE CENTRE HOSPITALIER PUBLIC D'HAUTEVILLE IN FRANCE AND REMAIN INVOLVED WITH BALSAM, THE LEBANESE CENTER FOR PALLIATIVE CARE, THROUGH ITS EDUCATIONAL MISSION. I AM A MEMBER OF THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL OF THE FRENCH ASSOCIATION FOR PALLIATIVE CARE (SFAP) AND AM ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, AND RESEARCH. I SERVE AS COURSE DIRECTOR FOR PALLIATIVE CARE PROGRAMS DESIGNED FOR FRENCH- AND ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES.



LUCIE HRDLIČKOVÁ, MD, PHD

I AM THE HEAD OF THE CENTER FOR PALLIATIVE MEDICINE AT THE 2ND FACULTY OF MEDICINE OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE AND THE LEAD PHYSICIAN OF THE PEDIATRIC SUPPORTIVE CARE TEAM AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL MOTOL AND HOMOLKA. I AM BOARD-CERTIFIED IN PEDIATRICS, PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY AND ONCOLOGY, AND PALLIATIVE MEDICINE. I SPECIALIZE IN PALLIATIVE CARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS AND IN COMMUNICATION IN HEALTHCARE. AS PART OF MY DOCTORAL STUDIES IN MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY, I FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING SERIOUS NEWS IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY. I FOUNDED AND LEAD THE SECTION OF PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE MEDICINE OF THE CZECH PEDIATRIC SOCIETY OF THE CZECH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF J. E. PURKYNĚ. I HAVE COMPLETED A NUMBER OF FELLOWSHIPS AT PRESTIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN THE USA, CANADA, ISRAEL, AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

Our Team



NICK PUROL, MSW

I AM THE LEAD CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER ON THE PEDIATRIC ADVANCED CARE TEAM (PACT), THE PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM AT BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE, WHERE I ALSO SERVE AS THE SOCIAL WORK FELLOWSHIP DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION. FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS, MY WORK HAS CENTERED ON THE ROLE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMS IN DELIVERING COMPASSIONATE, SKILLED CARE TO CHILDREN WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS AND THEIR FAMILIES, WITH A PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS AND EDUCATORS IN THE FIELD.



RAGNHILD FRETLAND, PHD

I'M A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST WORKING WITH CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE AT OSLO UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, NORWAY. MY MAIN FIELD IS COMMUNICATION, AND I HAVE A SPECIAL INTEREST IN HOW WE CAN PREVENT AND RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS AROUND TREATMENT DECISIONS WITH GOOD ADVANCE CARE PLANNING. I HAVE A PASSION FOR TEACHING AND SHARING PPC COMPETENCE AND LOVE BEING A PART OF THE EPEC FACULTY. MY SECRET COMMUNICATION TOOL WITH PATIENTS (AND PARENTS) WHEN NOTHING ELSE WORKS: MY THERAPY DOG VITA!

Our Team



KATARZYNA ŻAK-JASIŃSKA, MD

I AM A PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGIST AND HEMATOLOGIST, AND A PALLIATIVE CARE PHYSICIAN. I TEACH MEDICAL STUDENTS BRINGING THEM CLOSER TO THE SUBJECT OF PALLIATIVE CARE AND MEDICAL COMMUNICATION. I LEAD THE HOME HOSPICE TEAM FOR CHILDREN “AMBER HAVEN” IN GDYNIA. LAST YEAR I CREATED A NEW PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM IN MY HOSPITAL AND I AM VERY HAPPY BECAUSE OF IT. MY BIG DREAM IS TO BUILD THE BRIDGES BETWEEN A PALLIATIVE CARE AND PEDIATRICS ON A GLOBAL SCALE. I WANT TO WORK MORE AND MORE TO ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD IN THE WORLD, REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY ARE BORN, HAS ACCESS TO THE BEST MEDICAL CARE THEY NEED. WE ARE ALL CONNECTED.



LENKA KRISTLOVÁ, MA

I AM A PSYCHOLOGIST WORKING IN HEALTHCARE, CURRENTLY TRAINING TO BECOME A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST. I WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN OLOMOUC IN THE ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT AND AS PART OF A PERINATAL PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM, WHERE I FOCUS ON SUPPORTING MOTHERS AFTER STILLBIRTH. IN MY CLINICAL PRACTICE, I INTEGRATE APPROACHES SUCH AS EMOTION-FOCUSED THERAPY (EFT) AND COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT).

Our Team



ULRIKE SCHLODERER, MD

I AM A CONSULTANT IN PALLIATIVE MEDICINE, CURRENTLY WORKING WITHIN A SPECIALIZED PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM AT CARITAS GERMANY. MY CLINICAL PRACTICE IS FOCUSED ON THE COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT OF PATIENTS WITH ADVANCED AND LIFE LIMITING ILLNESSES, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO SYMPTOM CONTROL, ETHICAL DECISION MAKING, AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION. I ENGAGE CLOSELY WITH PATIENTS, FAMILIES, AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS TO ADDRESS COMPLEX MEDICAL, PSYCHOSOCIAL, AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS. MY WORK IS GROUNDED IN A COMMITMENT TO EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE, PATIENT AUTONOMY, PROMOTION OF QUALITY OF LIFE AND ONGOING SUPPORT OF PATIENTS AND FAMILIES IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES FROM DIAGNOSIS THROUGH END-OF-LIFE.



LUCIA DE ZEN, MD, PHD

I AM A PEDIATRICIAN AND SPECIALIST IN PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE WITH EXTENSIVE CLINICAL, ACADEMIC, AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY AND PAIN MANAGEMENT. I CURRENTLY SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF THE PEDIATRIC PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CARE CENTER AT THE IRCCS BURLO GAROFOLO IN TRIESTE, ITALY.

AFTER OBTAINING MY MEDICAL DEGREE AND SPECIALIZATION IN PEDIATRICS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PADUA (ITALY), I COMPLETED A PHD IN PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY AND A MASTER'S DEGREE IN PEDIATRIC PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CARE. I FURTHER ENHANCED MY TRAINING WITH ADVANCED STUDIES IN BIOETHICS.

Our Team



ZUZANA STANIČKOVÁ, MD

I AM A PHYSICIAN WITH LONG-TERM EXPERIENCE IN PERINATAL PALLIATIVE CARE AND DEVELOPMENTAL PEDIATRICS, INCLUDING LONG-TERM MONITORING AND OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WITH PERINATAL RISKS. MY FAVORITE TOPICS INCLUDE COMMUNICATION, CRISIS COUNSELING AND INTERVENTION, AND BIOETHICS. IN RECENT YEARS, I HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON TEACHING MEDICAL STUDENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND WORKING ON SYSTEMIC CHANGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL PERINATAL AND PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC.



JANA CHUDOBOVÁ, SW

I AM A SOCIAL WORKER AND CRISIS INTERVENTION SPECIALIST. I WORK AS A CASE MANAGER FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH LIFE-LIMITING AND LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS AT THE FACULTY HOSPITAL OLOMOUC. I AM INVOLVED IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL EHEALTH CENTRE, WHERE I FOCUS ON BRIDGING HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE. I ALSO LECTURE AT THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE, PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY IN OLOMOUC, WHERE I FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION AND HEALTHCARE INNOVATION.

Vlček Family Foundation

Vision



“We set up the Foundation in order to develop pediatric palliative care in the Czech Republic and to help build the best possible network of services that reflects the needs of families caring for children with serious illnesses.”



**KATARÍNA AND ONDŘEJ
VLČEK, FOUNDERS**