

1st PRIME Symposium: 28th-29th September, 2026

Prestonfield Room, John McIntyre Conference Centre, Edinburgh & Online

Monday: Day 1 Programme – Genetics/Genomics

9.00-9.10	Welcome & Scene Setting Kelly McLellan, PPI Representative, PRIME Delivery Group; Prof. Chris Ponting, Chair of Medical Bioinformatics, Univ. of Edinburgh
9.10-9.20	PRIME – The story so far Ed Hutchinson – Project Manager, PRIME, University of Edinburgh Daphne Lamirel – Senior Research Manager, Action for ME
9.20-9.40	The Future of ME/CFS Genetics: Official Launch of the Genetic Epidemiology of ME/CFS (GEM) International Consortium Dr. Hanna Ollila - FIMM EMBL Group leader, Institute for Molecular Medicine, University of Helsinki
9.40-9.45	Move to assigned break-out groups: Prestonfield, Holyrood and Salisbury Rooms
9.45-10.30	GEM-led Workshop: how genetics can generate testable hypotheses – 3 x breakout groups Dr. Hanna Ollila; Dr. Cindy Boer – Assistant Prof., Dept. of Internal Medicine, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam; Prof. Nasa Sinnott-Armstrong - Assistant Professor, Herbold Computational Biology Program, Public Health Sciences Division, Fred Hutch
10.30-10.35	Return to main auditorium – Prestonfield Room
10.35-10.45	Rapid feedback (Chair – Hanna Ollila)
BREAK	
11.10-11.40	Pitching Pathomechanisms – 4 x 7min presentations Prof. Chris Ponting; Prof. Doug Kell (online) - Research Chair in Systems Biology, University of Liverpool; Dr. Jackie Cliff – Senior Lecturer in Biosciences, Brunel University; Prof. Chris Armstrong (recorded) – Research Fellow, Dept. Biochemistry & Pharmacology, University of Melbourne
11.40-12.25	7 x Flash talks – ECRs: Sirine Saafi (Erasmus MC); Krishani Perera (Quadram Inst); Inga Williams (Univ. Oxford); Audrey Ryback (Univ. Edinburgh); Katherine Seton (Quadram Inst); Hannah Maude (Imperial); Aleya Lumsden (Univ. Oxford).
12.25-12.45	Open feedback: ME/CFS research: What works, what doesn't and what to do differently? Chair – Dr. David Newton – Research Director at ME Research UK

LUNCH & e-Poster Review

Afternoon Session

2.00-2.30	Panel discussion – The top 5 Questions we need to answer Chair – Audrey Ryback; Panel - Rob Wust: Assistant-professor at the Department of Human Movement Sciences at VU University Amsterdam; Karl Morten: Principal Investigator, Nuffield Dept. Women's & Reproductive Health, Univ. Oxford; Caroline Dalton: Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Genetics, Sheffield Hallam University; Matthias Wielscher: Lecturer/Senior Researcher, Medical University of Vienna
2.30-2.45	Summary of priority questions
2.45-3.30	'Open Mic' sessions: 'If I had a £1million.....' Dr. Matthias Wielscher; Dr. Joshua Dibble: Statistical Geneticist – DecodeME, University of Edinburgh Prof. Andrew Wilson: Clinical Senior Lecturer, University of East Anglia
BREAK	
4.00-4.40	Industry session – 4 x industry perspectives (4 x 10mins) Panel: Krystyna Taylor – SVP Women's Health, PrecisionLife; Jonathan Knowles - former Head of Group Research at Roche; former Director of the Glaxo Institute for Molecular Biology in Geneva, Head of European Research for Glaxo Wellcome and Head of the Glaxo Genetics Initiative; Nigel McCracken – CSO & COO, Virax BioLabs; Jack Hadfield/Nick Boyd-Gibbins (tbc) - Amatica Health
4.40-5.15	Chaired Industry Panel discussion - questions from online/in-person audience Chair: Ed Hutchinson
5.15-5.20	Summary of the day/wrap-up: Prof. Chris Ponting

Informal Breakout Discussions & e-Poster Review (optional)

END OF DAY 1

Note: **The Duddingston Room** has been made available as a quiet room for those attendees who may need some rest/recovery time during the symposium

Tuesday: Day 2 Programme – Current Research: Objectives, Impact & Public/Patient Involvement

9.00-9.10	Welcome – Action for ME
9.10-9.30	PRIME PPI Research Involvement Hub Sian Leary – Patient & Public Involvement Coordinator, Action for ME
9.30-9.45	Action for ME Big Survey – Intro and Preliminary Findings Katharine Cheston - Postdoctoral Research Associate, Institute for Medical Humanities, University of Durham
9.45-9.50	Move to assigned break-out groups: Prestonfield, Holyrood and Salisbury Rooms
9.50-10.30	AfME/PPI-led Workshop – 3 x breakout groups (Prestonfield, Holyrood and Salisbury Rooms)
10.30-10.35	Return to main auditorium – Prestonfield Room
10.35-10.45	Feedback from breakout sessions
BREAK	
11.15-11.35	Skeletal muscle alterations and post-exertional malaise in patients with ME and Long COVID Prof. Rob Wust - Assistant-professor at the Department of Human Movement Sciences at VU University Amsterdam
11.35-11.55	Rosetta Stone Prof. Danny Altmann – Professor of Immunology, Imperial
11.55-12.15	DISCOVERME Prof. David Price - Professor of Infection & Immunity, Cardiff University
12.15-12.35	Sequence ME & Long Covid Prof. Chris Ponting - Chair of Medical Bioinformatics, University of Edinburgh
12.35-12.45	Closing Remarks , Poster/Presentation Prizes, Feedback Forms, Plans for Symposium 2

LUNCH 12.45-2pm

END OF DAY 2/SYMPOSIUM

Thank you to our Symposium Sponsor:

