Advances in Cell and Gene Therapies Symposium 2026

Wednesday 27th May Time: 8.45am – 6.00pm. ACMD, 27 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, Vic 3065

Time	Topic	Presenter
8.15am	Registration (for 8.45am start)	
8.45am	**Opening and Acknowledgement of Country**	A/Prof Andrew Deans *St Vincent's Institute*
8.50am	**Introduction to the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery (ACMD)**	Michael Krieg *ACMD*
	Session 1: Keynote presentation (online) *Chair: Prof Shalin Naik (WEHI)*	
9.00am	Beyond Baby KJ: Developing a CRISPR Gene Editing Medicine On-Demand in 10 Weeks for a Child With a Severe Inborn Error of Immunity	Prof Fyodor Urnov *University of California, Berkeley*
	Session 2: State of the sector *Chair: Prof Shalin Naik (WEHI)*	
9.45am	Trends and perspective on the Genetic Medicine Landscape – Insights from ASGCT 2026	Chris Alma *Platypus Bio*
10.05am	Powering the Future of Cell Therapy: Capability Building, Current Challenges and What's Next for Cartherics	Dr Keefe Chan *Cartherics*
10.25am	**Break – Morning tea**	
	Session 3: Local sector capabilities *Chair: Prof Enzo Porrello (MCRI)*	
10.55am	Prime editing for drug controllable cellular therapies in vivo	Dr Miles Horton *WEHI*
11.15am	Viral vectors development and manufacturing	Vasily Medvedev *Viral Vector Manufacturing Facility*
11.35am	TBD	Dr Lisa Lombardi *Cerulea Clinical Trials*
11.55am	Engineering effective multi-targeting CAR T cell combinations for brain cancer	Prof Misty Jenkins AO *WEHI*
12.15pm	Developing Cellular Immunotherapies for Translation into Phase I Clinical Trials	Prof Jane Oliaro *Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre*
12.35pm	**Break - Lunch**	

	Session 4: Regulatory platforms rather than regulated products *Chair: Dr Gretchen Poortinga (Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre)*	
1.35pm	How could we better regulate cell and gene therapy products in Australia?	Prof John Skerritt AM *University of Melbourne*
1.55pm	The FDA plausible mechanism framework, and what it means (and doesn't mean) for the future of cell and gene therapies	Dr Thomas Wechsler *Ex J&J Gene Therapy*
	Session 5: Panel discussion *Facilitated by: Dr Jennifer Hollands (Cerulea Clinical Trials)*	
2.15pm	"Are we ready for in vivo?"	Mike Bettess *Brandon Capital* Dr Christina Cortez-Jugo *University of Melbourne* Prof Simon Harrison *Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre* Prof Misty Jenkins AO *WEHI* Dr Jacqui Schiesser *MCRI* Dr Thomas Wechsler *Ex J&J Gene Therapy*
3.00pm	**Break – Afternoon tea**	
	Session 6: Future facing forum *Chair: Prof Christine Wells (University of Melbourne)*	
3.30pm	Remote Stem Cells for Cardiac Repair: From Discovery to Clinical Translation	A/Prof Shiang Lim *St Vincent's Institute*
3.50pm	Prime editing hematopoietic stem cells to treat Fanconi anaemia	Dr Astrid Glaser *St Vincent's Institute*
4.10pm	Bispecific antibodies enable precision mRNA-LNP delivery	Bettina Dietmar *University of Queensland*
	Session 7: Patient voice *Chair: Prof Christine Wells (University of Melbourne)*	
4.30pm	In conversation	Dr Samantha Chan *Royal Melbourne Hospital, WEHI* Matthew Rozek *Patient representative*

4.50pm	Closing remarks	Prof Enzo Porrello *MCRI* Prof Christine Wells *University of Melbourne*
5.00pm	Networking	
6.00pm	Close	

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