



2025 Think Tank

Program Schedule

July 30 – August 1, 2025 | Washington, DC | Westin Hotel
Collaborating to Create Better Today's and More Tomorrows

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

- 10:00 – 4:00 **Registration Check In**
- 3:30 – 4:15 **Welcome and Opening Remarks** with BCAN CEO Meri-Margaret Deoudes and Co-founder Diane Zipursky Quale; Chair Shilpa Gupta, MD, Cleveland Clinic; and Co-Chair Max Kates, MD, Johns Hopkins
- 4:15 – 5:15 **New Faces of Bladder Cancer**
- 5:15 – 6:15 **Meet the 2025 John Quale Travel Fellows** with introduction by Scientific Review Group Chair, Max Kates, MD, Johns Hopkins Medicine
- 6:30 – 7:30 **Happy Hour – Meet and Greet**
- 7:30 – 9:00 **Welcome Dinner**

Thursday, July 31, 2025

- 7:00 – 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:00 – 9:30 **BCAN 2024 Patient-Centered Clinical Research Young Investigator Awardee** with introduction by Scientific Review Group Chair, Lindsey Herrel, MD, MS, University of Michigan
- Divya Ajay, MD, MPH, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center: *Enhancing patient-centered care with a decision support tool for choosing urinary diversions for bladder cancer patients undergoing radical cystectomy.*
- BCAN 2024 Young Investigator Awardees** with introduction by Scientific Review Group Chair, Neelam Mukherjee, PhD, University of Texas Health Center San Antonio
- Lucas Blanchard, PhD, The Rockefeller University: *Targeting regulatory T cells (Tregs) to improve antitumor immunity in BCG-unresponsive non-muscle invasive bladder cancer.*
 - Jonathan Anker, MD, PhD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai: *Characterizing and modulating TREM1 on SPPI macrophages to overcome resistance to immunotherapy in urothelial cancer.*

9:30 – 10:00 **Networking Break**

10:00 – 12:00 **Lessons Learned from Clinical Trials**

Co-Chairs: Seth Lerner, MD, Baylor College of Medicine; and Andrea Apolo, MD, National Institutes of Health

This session brings together leading experts to share key lessons learned from bladder cancer clinical trials, focusing on both cooperative group studies and investigator-initiated trials. Panelists will discuss insights from pivotal trials across all stages of bladder cancer such as SWOG 1602 (BCG in NMIBC), the Ambassador trial (pembrolizumab in muscle-invasive and locally advanced urothelial cancer), SWOG 1806 trial (chemotherapy and radiation with or without atezolizumab in localized MIBC), and CALGB 90601 (ALLIANCE, gem-cis with bevacizumab or placebo in patients with metastatic urothelial carcinoma).

The session will discuss trial design challenges and lessons learned from past trials, as well as upcoming trial results, offering valuable insights into the implications for future research. The session will also highlight the importance of patient perspectives in clinical trial design, emphasizing how patient engagement can improve enrollment, retention, and overall trial success. Join us for an insightful discussion on improving the future of bladder cancer clinical research.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Jonathan Rosenberg, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
- Jeannie Hoffman-Censits, MD, Johns Hopkins Medicine
- Robert Svatek, MD, University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio
- Parminder Singh, MD, Mayo Clinic Arizona
- Darrell Nakagawa, BCAN Patient Advocate, SWOG Bladder Cancer Patient Advocate

12:00 – 2:00 **Lunch and Rapid Research Update Session** – moderated by Armine Smith, MD, Johns Hopkins Medicine

Think Tank Title Sponsor Speakers:

- David Decewicz, MD, MS, MHA, Medical Director for Astellas/Pfizer partnership
- Julius Strauss, MD, Senior Clinical Trial Physician for Bristol Myers Squibb – *“Integrating Science and Unmet Needs: BMS’ Commitment to Urothelial Carcinoma Research”*
- Daniel Shoskes, MD, MSc, FRCS(C), Vice President, Medical Director Uro-Oncology for Ferring Pharmaceuticals – *“Safety and Efficacy of Adstiladrin: Lessons Learned Since FDA Approval”*
- Priyanka Madireddi, PhD, US Medical Director, for Johnson & Johnson
- Caretha L. Creasy, PhD, VP of Early Development for Urogen – *“Emerging, innovative treatments for non-muscle invasive bladder cancer”*

BCAN-Funded Investigator Speakers:

- Brendan Guercio, MD, University of Rochester Medical Center
- Philip Abbosh, MD, PhD, Fox Chase Cancer Center
- Bishoy Faltas, MD, Weill Cornell Medical Center

2:00 – 4:00 **Breakout sessions** (see page 5 for full descriptions)

4:00 – 4:30 **Networking Break**

4:30 – 6:00 **2025 John Quale Travel Fellow Poster Session and Happy Hour**

** Dinner on your own.*

Friday, August 1, 2025

7:00 – 8:00 **Breakfast**

8:00 – 9:30 **BCAN 2023 Bladder Cancer Research Innovation Awardees** with introduction by Scientific Review Group Chair, Ludmila Prokunina-Olsson, PhD, National Cancer Institute

- Christopher Garris, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital: *Overcoming immune suppressive myeloid cell barriers in bladder cancer*
- John Taylor, MD, MS, University of Kansas Medical Center: *Exploring therapeutic vulnerabilities for drug development in bladder cancer using Down Syndrome as a novel model*

9:30 – 10:00 **Networking Break**

10:00 – 12:00 **Breakout Sessions** (see page 9 for full descriptions)

12:00 – 1:00 **Networking Lunch**

1:00 – 3:00 **Balancing Innovation and Affordability: Collaborative Pathways in Bladder Cancer Care**

Co-Chairs: Parminder Singh, MD, Mayo Clinic; Matthew Mossanen, MD, MPH, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School; and Ruchika Talwar, MD, MMHC, Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

As bladder cancer treatment advances with high-cost therapies and complex combination regimens, the financial burden on patients and healthcare systems has reached critical levels. This session will explore the multifaceted issue of financial toxicity, examining the rising costs of care, from traditional urologic procedures to cutting-edge systemic and intravesical therapies. Experts from urology, oncology, healthcare policy, and pharmaceutical industries will provide

perspectives on how these costs impact accessibility and decision-making, with special attention to reimbursement challenges, insurance hurdles, and logistical barriers in delivering new treatments. A patient case study will highlight the real-world consequences of financial strain, grounding the discussion in patient-centric care. The panel will also focus on actionable strategies to mitigate financial toxicity. Speakers will discuss innovative patient assistance programs, collaborative payer-provider solutions, and legislative advocacy aimed at balancing innovation with affordability. By bringing together stakeholders across the healthcare spectrum, this session aims to identify pathways to improve cost transparency, enhance access, and reduce the financial stress that patients and providers face when navigating bladder cancer care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Richard Toner, Mayo Clinic
- Michael Louie, MD, MPH, MSC, EVP, Medical Affairs and Clinical Development, Urogen Pharma
- Stephanie Spence, PharmD, CSP, Certified Specialty Pharmacist Managed Care Leader

3:00 **Closing Remarks**

Thursday Breakout Discussion Sessions Descriptions:

1. Novel Therapeutics Across the Stages

Co-Chairs: Neelam Mukherjee, PhD, University of Texas Health Center San Antonio; and Petros Grivas, MD, PhD, University of Washington Medicine

This breakout session promises a deep dive into cutting-edge advancements in bladder, upper urinary tract, and urethral cancer therapeutics, emphasizing translational science and innovative approaches to overcoming therapeutic resistance. Key topics will include mechanisms of immune evasion, updates on ICIs and the integration of emerging biomarkers to enhance patient stratification and treatment personalization, facilitating tailored approaches to therapy. Featuring perspectives from leading experts in the field, the discussion will comprehensively address bladder cancer management across all stages—NMIBC, MIBC, and metastatic disease. Special attention will be given to novel therapeutic strategies and forward-looking clinical trial designs, offering a unique opportunity to connect preclinical advancements with clinical applications. Join us for an interdisciplinary exploration of bladder cancer innovation and future directions.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Rosa Nadal, MD, PhD, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
- Matthew Milowsky, MD, FASCO, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- Sarah Psutka, MD, MSc, University of Washington Medicine
- Larry Fong, MD, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center

2. Tech-Driven Advancements: The Role of Technology in Bladder Cancer Care

Co-Chairs: John Sfakianos, MD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai; and Saum Ghodoussipour, MD, Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Explore the evolving intersection of technology and bladder cancer care in this dynamic, interactive session. Designed for urologists, oncologists and researchers, this breakout offers a deep dive into cutting-edge innovations and their transformative impact on patient outcomes. From robotic intracorporeal diversion techniques to emerging tools for non-muscle invasive bladder cancer and innovative research tools, this session highlights practical applications for utilizing the latest advancements. We'll examine the successes and failures of past technologies, sparking a discussion about whether certain innovations deserve a second look. Thought leaders from urologic oncology focused on robotic surgery and researchers who are using novel research techniques, alongside industry experts, will share insights into promising developments shaping the future of bladder cancer care. With an emphasis on bridging generational divides within the field, this session aims to reengage the next generation of urologists fostering a collaborative, technology-driven approach to bladder cancer treatment.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Vignesh Packiam, MD, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
- Katie Murray, DO, NYU Langone Health

3. Uncharted Territory: Uncovering the Unknown Risk Factors for Bladder Cancer

Co-Chairs: Philip Abbosh, MD, PhD, Fox Chase Cancer Center; Stella Koutros, PhD, MPH, National Cancer Institute; and Sunil Patel, MD, MA, Johns Hopkins Medicine

Cigarette smoking accounts for roughly 50% of bladder cancer cases, but what about the other half? This provocative session will challenge clinician-researchers to dive deeper into the lesser-known and often-overlooked risk factors contributing to bladder cancer with the goal of forming a working group to address knowledge gaps. It will also integrate cross-disciplinary insights, and design innovative research initiatives to advance prevention and inform clinical care. From environmental exposures like drinking water contaminants and occupational risks to lifestyle factors such as BMI, diet, and radiation, we will examine the state of the evidence, question assumptions, and explore the nuanced interplay of these risks. Emerging areas of inquiry, including reproductive factors, UTIs, diabetes, processed meat intake, and the ambiguous role of coffee, will also be critically discussed.

How do we bridge the gap between what is known and what remains unexplored? What actionable steps can be taken to translate data into impactful prevention strategies? If you're ready to think beyond the status quo and tackle the pressing unknowns in bladder cancer risk, this session is for you.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Laura Beane Freeman, PhD, National Cancer Institute
- Jonathan Wright, MD, MS, FACS, University of Washington School of Medicine
- Robert Schreiber, BCAN Patient Advocate

4. From Recognition to Action: Tackling Disparities in Bladder Cancer Care

Chair: Samuel L. Washington III, MD, MAS, University of California, San Francisco

Ready to move beyond acknowledging disparities and start implementing change? This session highlights real-world solutions to inequities in bladder cancer care, featuring results from the Association of Cancer Care Centers (ACCC) led quality improvement workshops at University of North Carolina, University of Kentucky and St. Jude's. Chana Weinstock will address efforts to make the clinical trial populations more reflective and representative of patients in the US. Dive into the underrepresentation of women in bladder cancer trials with insights from Dr. Laura Bukavina and discuss insights on leading institutional efforts to develop transformative strategies to reduce systemic barriers with Dr. Patrick J. Hensley. Join us to explore actionable steps for creating a more inclusive and equitable future in bladder cancer research and care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Patrick J. Hensley, MD, University of Kentucky
- Laura Bukavina, MD, MPH, Cleveland Clinic
- Chana Weinstock, MD, US Food and Drug Administration

5. Tracking and Tackling an Increasing Trend in Young-Onset Bladder/Urothelial Cancer (YOB/UC)

Co-Chairs: Shilpa Gupta, MD, Cleveland Clinic; and Ashish Kamat, MD, MBBS, MD Anderson Cancer Center

Stories of young adults diagnosed with bladder cancer are becoming far too common, hinting at an unsettling rise that demands attention. Building on last year's momentum, this session introduces a bold international collaboration between BCAN and IBCG to uncover and address this growing challenge. We will explore potential drivers like genetic predispositions, environmental exposures, and biological distinctions, while highlighting innovative treatments and survivorship strategies unique to younger patients. Attendees will help shape a dynamic research agenda and establish a dedicated working group, paving the way for meaningful, patient-centered solutions to transform YOB/UC care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Mario Fernández, Clínica Alemana Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, Chile
- Melanie Pepin, Genetics Counselor, BCAN Patient Advocate
- Kristen Watts, BCAN Patient Advocate

6. Management of Muscle-Invasive Bladder Cancer Without Cystectomy

Co-Chairs: Leslie Ballas, MD, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; and Matthew Galsky, MD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

This session explores bladder-preserving approaches for muscle-invasive bladder cancer, including radiation-based trials, systemic therapy alone, and emerging trial designs. Urologists, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, and patients will engage in discussions about integrating these trials into practice and addressing key questions in this evolving field.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Roger Li, MD, Moffitt Cancer Center
- Pooja Ghatalia, MD, Fox Chase Cancer Center
- Comron Hassanzadeh, MD, MPH, MD Anderson Cancer Center

7. Measuring What Matters: Designing and Funding Transformative PRO Research

Co-Chairs: Lindsey Herrel, MD, MS, University of Michigan; and Kelly Bree, MD, MD Anderson

Unlock the power of patient voices in bladder cancer research! This dynamic session will inspire and equip researchers with the tools to design impactful patient-reported outcomes (PRO) studies that prioritize real-world patient experiences. This session will delve into actionable strategies for selecting meaningful outcomes, sustaining patient engagement, and securing funding. Explore how to effectively incorporate PRO measures into therapeutic and other clinical trials, ensuring applicability for all clinical research. With insights from the BRIDGE PRO committee and lessons from the BCG vs. gem/docetaxel trial, attendees will leave empowered to tackle common challenges and craft research that drives patient-centered care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Angela B. Smith, MD, MS, UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Kathryn A. Marchetti, MD, University of Pittsburgh
- Robert Lipman, BCAN Patient Advocate

8. Beyond the Scope: Non-Invasive Monitoring in Bladder Cancer

Co-Chairs: Keyan Salari, MD, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital; and Kristen Scarpato, MD, MPH, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

This breakout session will delve into the rapidly advancing field of non-invasive bladder cancer monitoring. Specific attention will be given towards de-escalating cystoscopies in favor of less invasive surveillance. Explore the potential of urine biomarkers—MRD versus specific mutations—their readiness for clinical use, and the steps needed to validate and implement these tools. Gain insights into the evolving role of ctDNA, including its anticipated applications and timelines for broader adoption. Understand what needs to happen in order to reduce the burden of cystoscopies.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Aadel Chaudhuri, MD, PhD, Mayo Clinic
- Yair Lotan, MD, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Friday Breakout Discussion Sessions Descriptions:

1. Optimizing Bladder Cancer Care for Older Adults: Tailoring Treatment for Complex Health Needs While Balancing Efficacy, Tolerance and Quality of Life

Chairs: Brendan Guercio, MD, University of Rochester Medical Center

This session will discuss selecting treatments that optimize the balance between treatment efficacy and treatment side effects and that best match each patient's personalized goals. How can geriatric oncologists be helpful in developing supportive measures (like nutrition plans, physical therapy, reducing polypharmacy) that can help older patients tolerate bladder cancer treatments better? Hear from experts in geriatric oncology as they share their research about comorbidities and medications and their impacts on cognition and other factors.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Sindhuja Kadambi, MD, MS, University of Rochester Medical Center
- Elizabeth Kessler, MD, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
- Tullika Garg, MD, MPH, Penn State Cancer Institute
- Michael Rabow, MD, FAAHPM, University of California, San Francisco

2. Move Over Mickey: Modeling with and Beyond the Mouse to Expand Translational Insights in Bladder Cancer

Co-Chairs: Karin Allenspach Jorn, DVM, MS, PhD, DECVIM-CA, University of Georgia; and William Y. Kim, MD, University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill

Bladder cancer research has long relied on traditional mouse models to advance our understanding of disease mechanisms and therapeutic interventions. However, emerging models, including patient-derived xenografts, humanized mice, organoids, and canine comparative models are pushing the boundaries of translational insights. This session will spotlight innovative preclinical approaches, their unique contributions to studying variant histologies and immunotherapy, and the challenges of integrating these models into clinical research. Featuring a multidisciplinary panel, the discussion will explore how building a better mouse “trap” and thinking beyond the mouse can transform the way we tackle bladder cancer and accelerate discoveries for patients.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Chong-Xian Pan, MD, PhD, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School
- Karin Allenspach Jorn, DVM, MS, PhD, DECVIM-CA, University of Georgia
- Deborah W. Knapp, DVM, MS, DACVIM, Purdue University
- Burles A. Johnson III, MD, PhD, Johns Hopkins Medicine

3. Difficult Conversations: Practitioners & Conversations with Patients on Depression, Intimacy, Mental & Sexual Health

Co-Chairs: Gail Dykstra, BCAN Patient Advocate; Armine K. Smith, MD, Johns Hopkins Medicine; and Krisztina Emodi, FNP, MPH, CNS, University of California San Francisco

This session focuses on research, practice-oriented studies, and tips on including these difficult but essential topics within the bladder cancer healthcare routine. Recent studies have identified depression in high percentages of bladder cancer patients, along with concerns about intimacy and sexual health. Awareness of the importance of these issues in promoting positive treatment experiences may be uncomfortable to include in a routine checkup. Finding sufficient clinical and community resources for follow-up patient support may also pose issues for clinicians. We will explore the mental health assessment of bladder cancer patients and its connection to treatment outcomes and survivorship. This session includes practitioner-developed guides, bladder cancer research studies results, and evidence-based strategies to assess and address mental health concerns as part of holistic care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Glenn Treisman, MD, PhD, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
- Daniela A. Wittmann, PhD, LMSW, University of Michigan
- Armine Smith, MD, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
- Mary Sullivan, BCAN Patient Advocate
- Brian Billings, BCAN Patient Advocate

4. Integrating Complementary Medicine in Bladder Cancer Care: Evidence, Practice and Innovation

Co-Chairs: Sarah Psutka, MD, MSc, University of Washington; and Anna Bausum, ND, Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University

How can complementary therapies enhance bladder cancer care while maintaining evidence-based rigor? This breakout session delves into the growing interest in integrating complementary medicine into clinical practice, focusing on therapies such as acupuncture, Tai Chi, yoga and mindfulness techniques. With an emphasis on patient-centered approaches, we'll explore the latest research on their potential to reduce treatment-related side effects, improve quality of life, and address physical and emotional well-being.

Designed for clinician-researchers, this session will provide practical insights into evaluating the evidence behind these therapies, strategies for safely integrating them into conventional care, and frameworks for patient education and shared decision-making. We'll also examine innovative research opportunities to better understand the mechanisms, efficacy, and optimal applications of complementary therapies in bladder cancer treatment. Join us to explore how a holistic, evidence-based approach can empower patients and advance care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Hanna (Oh) Hunter, MD, University of Washington

5. What Comes Next: Evolving Care Strategies After EV-Pembro in Bladder Cancer

Co-Chairs: Sia Daneshmand, MD, University of Southern California; Gopakumar Iyer, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; and Gail Dykstra, BCAN Patient Advocate

This breakout session addresses the growing need for effective decision-making and care strategies for patients following EV-pembro treatment. Key topics will include consolidation strategies after induction therapy, the timing and role of cystectomy or radiation and options for managing disease progression. Discussions will cover questions like: How often should cystoscopies be performed? What is the best approach for

recurrence—intravesical therapy, cystectomy, or radiation? In a new era of partial and complete responses to EV-pembro, what does this mean for long-term care and treatment paradigms? With limited long-term data available, now is the time to design studies, recruit patients, and establish frameworks to gather the insights necessary to chart the next phase of care. Join this forward-thinking discussion to explore these pressing questions and shape the future of post-EV-pembro care.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Neil Desai, MD, UT Southwestern Medical Center
- Vadim S. Koshkin, MD, University of California San Francisco
- Anishka D'Souza, MD, University of Southern California
- Fed Ghali, MD, Yale School of Medicine

6. Familial Bladder Cancer and Germline Mutations

Co-Chairs: Eugene Pietzak, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; and Ludmila Prokunina-Olsson, PhD, National Cancer Institute

The session will cover the significance of germline mutations in bladder cancer, their implications for personalized care, and how they intersect with the broader monitoring landscape. Join us for a forward-thinking discussion on how these innovations are reshaping bladder cancer surveillance and treatment strategies.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Melanie Pepin, MS, CGC, BCAN Patient Advocate
- Stella Koutros, PhD, MPH, National Cancer Institute
- Douglas Stewart, MD, National Cancer Institute

7. AI Disruption in Bladder Cancer Pathology: Revolutionizing Diagnosis, Subtyping, and Beyond

Co-Chairs: Donna Hansel, MD PhD, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center; and Hikmat Al-Ahmadie, MD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

Join us for an engaging exploration of how artificial intelligence is transforming bladder cancer pathology. Dive into cutting-edge applications of AI in histopathology and cytology, including tumor subtyping, biomarker quantification, and predictive modeling for recurrence and treatment outcomes. Explore AI-driven innovations in integrating multi-omics data and the potential for cross-disciplinary insights from other cancers like melanoma and lung cancer. With leading experts in computational pathology and interactive panel discussion, this session promises to bridge the gap between AI research and clinical applications.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Matthew Hanna, MD, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
- Kun-Hsing Yu, MD, PhD, Harvard Medical School
- Samer N. Khader, MD, FIAC, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

8. Tech-Savvy Recovery: Can Wearables and Health Apps Signal Complications After Bladder Cancer Surgery?

Co-Chairs: Scott M. Gilbert, MD, MS, Moffitt Cancer Center; and Jeffrey Scott Montgomery, MD, MHSA, University of Michigan

Can wearable devices and mobile apps revolutionize recovery after major cancer surgery? This session dives into the emerging area of digital health tools such as health apps, biometric trackers and symptom reporting tools and their potential use to transform post-cystectomy care. Drawing insights from recent research, we will explore how patient-reported and -generated health data might be used to identify patient complications and improve recovery outcomes after hospital discharge. Learn about the early and recent research results on this topic and join us to discuss the future of remote health technology, its practical applications in bladder cancer care, and the barriers we must overcome to integrate these tools into clinical practice.

Invited Discussion Leaders:

- Jennifer R. Cracchiolo, MD, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center