UCL
Clinical Research Training Fellowship Supervisors 2027

Dr Maria Del Pilar Acedo Nunez
Institute for Liver and Digestive Health
Co supervisor: **Prof John Bridgewater**

Early detection of pancreatic cancer and cholangiocarcinoma using biomarkers, proteomics and spatial biology in human samples.

Clinical specialities: oncology, gastroenterology, HPB, surgery

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Prof Dimitrios Anastasiou
Institute for Liver and Digestive Health

We investigate how diet and other environmental exposures shape systemic metabolism and immunity to influence tumour development and response to therapy. Our mission is to leverage these insights to enable cancer early detection and interception, inform prevention strategies and improve treatment outcomes.
Role of diet and systemic metabolism in liver cancer incidence, development and response to therapy. Medical imaging and discovery of new blood metabolic markers for early cancer detection.

Clinical specialties: Oncology, hepatology, radiology

Dr Eileen Boyle
UCL Cancer Institute - Research Department of Haematology

The myeloma group is interested in understanding the determinants of initiation and progression from myeloma precursor conditions to multiple myeloma, focusing on genomics and interactions with the immune microenvironment that shape tumour growth and evolution. My goal is to translate these biological insights into improved clinical strategies for prevention, risk stratification, and treatment.

Clinical specialities: Myeloma and precursors

Assoc. Prof. Filipe Correia Martins
EGA Institute for Women's Health - Women's Cancer

Initiation and evolution of high-grade serous ovarian cancer to inform early detection at pre-cancerous stage. New strategies for risk stratification, identification of pre-cancerous state and interception of tumour initiation/progression.

Clinical specialties: Obstetrics & Gynaecology; Pathology; Medical Oncology

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Prof Aleksandra Gentry-Maharaj
EGA Institute for Women's Health - Women's Cancer

My expertise is in early detection of women's cancers with main focus on ovarian and endometrial cancer screening, genetic predisposition to ovarian cancer and biomarker discovery. My research group, Centre for Early Detection and Innovation (CEDI), focuses on cancer inequalities and innovations in early detection of women's cancers.

Clinical specialties: Gynaecological Oncology

Dr Crispin Hiley
UCL Cancer Institute – Research Department of Oncology

Lung cancer is often detected too late, and current screening has important limitations. We will use blood samples from the 500-patient UK NIMBLE study to develop an immune age blood test combining immune profiling, ultra-sensitive DNA sequencing, and clinical imaging data to improve early lung cancer detection, nodule risk stratification, and patient outcomes.

Clinical specialities: oncology, respiratory, pathology

Prof Joseph Jacob
UCL Respiratory and Computer Science

Cancer detection and prognostication in lung cancer screening populations. We have access to tens of thousands of CT scans with clinical data to predict cancer risk.

Clinical specialities: Radiology, Respiratory Medicine

Prof Marnix Jansen
UCL Cancer Institute - Department of pathology

Patients with familial cancer syndromes, including Lynch syndrome, face elevated cancer risk from a young age and undergo surveillance to detect and intercept disease early. We aim to map the molecular immunophenotype and natural history of precursor lesions, revealing how emerging cancers interact with the immune system before clinical diagnosis.

Clinical specialities: Oncology, Histopathology, Genetics

Prof Veeru Kasivisvanathan
Division of Surgery and Targeted Intervention - Dept of Targeted Intervention

My work (PRECISION trial, NEJM) has led to the first major change in 30 years in the way that we diagnose prostate cancer, introducing MRI into the pathway. I am interested in optimising the way we use MRI, exploring novel technology such as PSMA PET and using artificial intelligence.

Clinical specialties: Urology, radiology, prostate cancer.

Dr Lydia Lee
UCL Cancer Institute - Research Department of Haematology

Lydia and her team are investigating the role of the immune dysfunction in disease progression and response to treatment. This work will provide greater insights into the pathogenic mechanisms of myeloma and also aid the development of rational therapeutic strategies for the treatment of this cancer. Smouldering myeloma, immune microenvironment

Clinical specialties: Haemotology, plasma cell disorders, CAR T cell therapy

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Prof. Juan Pedro Martinez-Barbera
GOS Institute of Child Health

Our lab investigates the role of cellular senescence in cancer and ageing. This PhD project will explore how senescent cells accumulate in the ageing prostate and how they contribute to tumour initiation and progression. Using cutting-edge mouse models, human tissues and molecular approaches, the student will uncover mechanisms driving prostate cancer and identify novel opportunities for therapeutic intervention.

Clinical specialties: prostate cancer

Prof. Neal Navani
UCL Division of Medicine – UCL respiratory

I am interested in the early detection and diagnosis of lung cancer. Lung cancer screening identifies nodules but does not define whether nodules are benign or malignant. The PhD project will involve the use of novel techniques via minimally invasive robotic bronchoscopy to diagnose (and treat) early-stage lung cancer.

Clinical specialties: Respiratory medicine, Interventional pulmonology, thoracic oncology

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Dr. Laura Panagiotaki
UCL Department of Computer Science

Our research develops quantitative imaging biomarkers and AI-driven tools that reveal cancer microstructure before conventional methods can detect disease. We translate innovations such as VERDICT-MRI from the laboratory to multicentre clinical studies, offering opportunities to work at the interface of imaging science, computer science, oncology, and patient impact.

Clinical specialties: Oncology, radiology, histopathology

Prof Hirak Patra
Division of Surgery and Interventional Science

Precision liquid biopsy using extracellular vesicles for early-stage breast cancer detection

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Prof Elspeth Payne
UCL Cancer Institute - Research Department of Haematology

My lab is interested in clonal haematopoiesis as a risk factor for haematological malignancies. We use zebrafish, longitudinal datasets and bone marrow organoids to understand cell intrinsic and extrinsic mechanisms driving clonal expansion.

Dr Adam Pennycuick
Division of Medicine

As a mathematically trained oncologist, I want to see cancer forming and stop it — using digital-pathology AI, spatial multi-omics and evolutionary modelling on the world's largest pre-invasive archive, plus SUMMIT lung-screening molecular and imaging data, to turn early detection into interception.

Medical oncology, respiratory

Dr Ricky Thakrar
Division of Medicine

Research interests include robotic bronchoscopy, advanced bronchoscopy, lung cancer screening, early lung cancer diagnosis, image-guided biopsy, artificial intelligence and bronchoscopic therapies. Projects span clinical trials, translational research and implementation science to improve diagnostic accuracy, patient safety and access to earlier curative treatment.

Clinical specialties: Respiratory Medicine; Interventional Pulmonology; Lung Cancer; Screening and Early Detection; Advanced Bronchoscopy (including robotic bronchoscopy)

Prof Jayant Vaidya
Division of Surgery and Targeted Intervention - Dept of Targeted Intervention

I believe it is possible to use the current breast screening infrastructure to improve our understanding of natural history of the disease, reduce overtreatment of indolent cancers (or DCIS), improve women's experience, device novel methods of detection that detect lethal cancers more accurately (using on-site pathological diagnosis using novel technology (already developed and ready for clinical testing). Breast cancer, overdiagnosis, improving communication, targeted risk-adjusted screening.

Clinical specialties: breast cancer, surgery, radiotherapy, imaging, engineering nanotechnology

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Prof Simon Walker-Samuel
Centre for Computational Medicine / Department of Imaging

Using computational modelling and deep learning to define imaging biomarkers suggestive of the earliest presence of disease.

Clinical specialties: Oncology, surgery, radiology

Dr Hayley Whitaker
Division of Surgery and Targeted Intervention - Dept of Targeted Intervention

We are developing new approaches, reagents and drugs to prevent and diagnose prostate cancer, particularly in men of African descent. This will involve a collaboration with colleagues from the Department of Ageing, Rheumatology & Regenerative Medicine and the MHRA.

Clinical specialties: Urology and andrology