



June 4, 2026

2026 Mayo Clinic Alumni Association (MCAA) International Program

Thurs., June 4 – Sat., June 6, 2026

Royal Hotel Sanremo

Sanremo, Italy

CME Course Co-Directors:

Elizabeth Cozine, M.D. (MED '11, FM '14), Department of Family Medicine Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Atul Jain, M.D. (GIM '14), Division of General Internal Medicine, Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Time	Session Topic/Title or Activity
Thurs., June 4, 2026	Royal Hotel Sanremo, Sanremo, Italy
2:00-4:30	Registration open for pick-up of name tags and welcome gift
6:00~8 p.m.	Welcome reception on the terrace for faculty, attendees and guests
Fri., June 5, 2026	Royal Hotel Sanremo, Sanremo, Italy
8 a.m.	Welcome Elizabeth Cozine, M.D. (MED '11, FM '14), Department of Family Medicine Mayo Clinic in Rochester and Atul Jain, M.D. (GIM '14), Division of General Internal Medicine, Mayo Clinic in Arizona, Course Co-Directors
8-8:30 a.m.	Lung Nodules 2.0: Diagnosis and Management Kenneth K. Sakata, M.D. (I '12, CMR '13, THD '15, CCMI '16, IADP '17), Mayo Clinic Arizona Cyril Varghese, M.D. (I '16, THDC '20), Mayo Clinic Arizona
8:30-9 a.m.	Optimizing Exercise as We Age: How to Keep a Baby Boomer Buff Ed Laskowski, M.D. (PMR '90), Mayo Clinic Rochester
9-9:30 a.m.	From Challenges to Opportunities, Addressing Representation in Medicine Alyx Porter, M.D. (I1 '04, N '07, NONC '08), Mayo Clinic Arizona
9:30-10 a.m.	AI and Dementia: Improving Diagnosis and Management David Jones, M.D. (N '11, CI '13, NBN '14), Mayo Clinic Rochester
10 a.m.	BREAK
10:15-10:45 a.m.	Conundrums in Neuro Palliative Care Maisha Robinson, M.D. (I1 '08, N '11, NHSP '13), Mayo Clinic Florida
10:45-11:15 a.m.	Precision Beginnings: Redefining Neonatal Medicine Whitney Thompson, M.D., M.Phil. (PD '23, PDNE '27), Mayo Clinic Rochester
11:15-11:45 p.m.	First Do No Harm... To Ourselves Rahma Warsame, M.D. (I '13, HEMO '16, HEMA '17) Mayo Clinic Rochester
11:45-12:15 p.m.	Radiation Oncology Technology David Routman, M.D. (RADO '20), Mayo Clinic Rochester
12:15-12:45 p.m.	HopeSphere: Leveraging Virtual Reality to Enhance Healthcare Mark Edwin, M.D. (I '94, CMR '95), Mayo Clinic Arizona



1 p.m.

LUNCH

Time	Session Topic/Title or Activity
Sat., June 6, 2026	Royal Hotel Sanremo
8 a.m.	Welcome Elizabeth Cozine, M.D. (MED '11, FM '14), Department of Family Medicine Mayo Clinic in Rochester and Atul Jain, M.D. (GIM '14), Division of General Internal Medicine, Mayo Clinic in Arizona, Course Co-Directors
8:00-8:30 a.m.	Narrative Medicine: Improve Health Understanding and Empathy Denise Millstine, M.D. (WHLTH '13), Mayo Clinic Arizona
8:30-9 a.m.	Advancing Bold.Forward Through Culture and Connection: Reconnecting People, Purpose, and Partnership Kristen Wende , Mayo Clinic Florida
9-9:30 a.m.	Why Clay lives on a cul'de-sac – a discussion of risk and its application to medical decision-making Clayton Cowl, M.D. (THDC '00), Mayo Clinic Rochester
9:30-10 a.m.	Donor-Derived Infections: Challenges in Organ Transplantation Holenarasipur (Vik) Vikram, M.D. (INFD '05), Mayo Clinic Arizona
10:00 a.m.	BREAK
10:15-10:45 a.m.	Value of Perioperative Medicine: Optimizing Outcomes for Safer Surgery Joan M. Irizarry-Alvarado, M.D., FACP, DFPM (I '06, CMR '07), Mayo Clinic Florida
10:45-11:15 a.m.	Integrative Approaches to Longevity Jyoti Patel, M.D. (GIM '25), Mayo Clinic Arizona
11:15-11:45 a.m.	Unexplained Dyspnea: Expanding Your Differential Diagnosis Jan Stepanek, MD MPH FASMA DIMM (I '97, CMR '98), Mayo Clinic Arizona
11:45-12:15 p.m.	Bold. Forward. Unbound. How Future Physical Spaces and Technologies Improve Care, Outcomes and Experiences Craig Daniels, M.D. (I'01, CI '03, THDC '04), Mayo Clinic Rochester
	CME Program concludes
12:30-1:30 p.m.	LUNCH



Speaker Bios

LUNG NODULES 2.0: DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT

Kenneth K. Sakata, M.D. (I '12, CMR '13, THD '15, CCMI '16, IADP '17), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Sakata is a consultant at Mayo Clinic in Arizona, who is board certified in internal medicine, pulmonology, critical care medicine and interventional pulmonology. His primary focus revolves around interventional pulmonology with specific interest in bronchoscopy, lung cancer and pleural diseases. He is highly trained and skilled in advanced diagnostic/therapeutic flexible and rigid bronchoscopy and airway stents. He also has expertise in performing medical thoracoscopy for pleural biopsies, placement and management of tunneled indwelling pleural catheters, and chest tube placement.

Dr. Sakata has been named among Phoenix Magazine's Top Docs for consecutive years and is a recipient of the Top Performed Award given by Mayo Clinic Patient Experience in Arizona.

Cyril Varghese, M.D. (I '16, THDC '20), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Varghese is a consultant in the Division of Pulmonary Medicine with a joint appointment in the Department of Critical Care Medicine. He also is the associate co-chair of Platform for the Department of Critical Care Medicine.

Dr. Varghese's research bridges medicine and technology by focusing on developing, validating and testing machine learning tools to diagnose and treat pulmonary diseases. He studies radiomics-based scoring systems for lung cancer risk stratification and advances voice analytics to predict different aspects of pulmonary physiology. His multidisciplinary lab integrates experts with domain knowledge in various disciplines, including speech and voice science; ear, nose and throat; pulmonary medicine; and engineering.

His research team aims to individualize patient care in pulmonary medicine by analyzing biometric signals such as voice, imaging and clinical data.

Dr. Varghese has received the KL2 Career Development Award from the National Institutes of Health for several consecutive years. He has been named Mayo Clinic's Teacher of the Year and has received the Golden Apple Award for Teaching from Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine.

OPTIMIZING EXERCISE AS WE AGE: HOW TO KEEP A BABY BOOMER BUFF

Ed Laskowski, M.D. (PMR '90), Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Edward Laskowski is a leading international figure in the field of Sports Medicine and Physical Rehabilitation. Board certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, he has been an integral part of the prestigious staff at the Mayo Clinic, where he has served as director of the Sports Medicine Center.

Dr. Laskowski's expertise spans a wide range of disciplines, from sports medicine to fitness and strength and stability training. His influence extends beyond clinical practice, as he has been recognized nationally and internationally for his contributions to the world of sport and health. He was appointed by President George W. Bush to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and awarded a Distinguished Service Award from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Laskowski is a consultant to the National Hockey Association and also has been a key part of renowned sporting events, such as the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City and the Chicago Marathon, providing quality medical care.



NARRATIVE MEDICINE: IMPROVE HEALTH UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY

Denise Millstine, M.D. (WHLTH '13), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Millstine is a consultant in the Division of Women's Health and Division of General Internal Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. She is the director of Section of Integrative Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. Her work focuses on providing care to women and giving integrative medicine care to all. Dr. Millstine's interests also include menopause, narrative medicine, and the use of books and reading to improve health understanding and empathy. She is the creator and host of the Mayo Clinic [Read. Talk. Grow. Podcast](#), which features authors and experts talking about books and health.

Dr. Millstine's research focuses on:

- Nonhormonal management of menopause.
- Integrative medicine in cancer care.
- Acupuncture in perioperative settings.
- Mind-body approaches through a wearable device in breast cancer.
- Cancer-related fatigue management.
- Ayurvedic self-assessment in cognitive health.
- Integrative medicine in headache management.

AI AND DEMENTIA: IMPROVING DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT

David Jones, M.D. (N '11, CI '13, NBN '14), Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Jones is a neurologist with specialty interest in cognitive and behavioral neurology, network-based neurodegeneration, and the application of multimodal neuroimaging with an emphasis on MRI and PET. He is the co-director of the Normal Pressure Hydrocephalous Clinic and a passionate advocate for these patients. Dr. Jones also has many active internal and external collaborations with investigators across the world, including at the University of Minnesota to translate advances made by the Human Connectome Project to measure brain networks during aging and in Alzheimer's disease.

As the Director of the Mayo Clinic Neurology Artificial Intelligence Program, Dr. Jones' unique expertise in artificial intelligence and cognitive and behavioral neurology has expanded early detection and treatment options for neurodegenerative diseases and other conditions affecting brain aging.

Dr. Jones and his team developed an AI tool called StateViewer, which is used across Mayo Clinic to type and detect nine different neurodegenerative diseases, including Lewy body dementia and Alzheimer's disease, by analyzing fluorodeoxyglucose PET scans. The program has an 88 percent accuracy at correctly pinpointing the neurological type, according to a recent [Neurology paper](#) co-authored by Jones.

Dr. Jones has earned numerous awards and honors, including the de Leon Prizes in Neuroimaging, and is a board advisor with the American Brain Foundation.



CONUNDRUMS IN NEURO-PALLIATIVE CARE

Maisha Robinson, M.D. (I1 '08, N '11, NHSP '13), Mayo Clinic in Florida

Dr. Robinson is a consultant in the Department of Neurology at Mayo Clinic in Florida, with a joint appointment in the Department of Medicine. She established the clinic's first neuropalliative care program and currently serves as the division chair of Palliative Medicine, as the program director for the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship, and as the chair of the Ethics Subcommittee.

Dr. Robinson has spoken nationally and internationally on neuropalliative care, edited a book titled "Case Studies in Neuropalliative Care," and is a member of the American Board of Internal Medicine Test Writing Committee on Hospice and Palliative Medicine. She is also very active with the American Academy of Neurology, currently serving as the chair of the Member Engagement Committee and as a member of the Board of Directors.

PRECISION BEGINNINGS: REDEFINING NEONATAL MEDICINE

Whitney Thompson, M.D., M.Phil. (PD '23, PDNE '27), Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Thompson is a PGY-6 fellow in the Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine Program and the Clinician Investigator Training Program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. In addition to training in neonatology, Dr. Thompson has also completed fellowship training in Medical Genetics and Genomics through an individualized dual-training pathway. She received the Gunnar B. Stickler Award for Excellence in Patient Care and the C. Anderson Aldrich Award for Excellence in Medical Research, she has continued to grow in both expertise and national recognition.

Dr. Thompson has pursued advanced training in bioethics, initially through the Mayo Clinic Biomedical Ethics Scholars Training Program and more recently through the Children's Mercy Pediatric Bioethics Certificate Program. She was awarded the Dorothea Berggren Innovation Scholarship for this external training that she is completing concurrently with her integrated clinical and research pathways. She has also been invited to serve on the Clinical Advisory Board for Inflection Medicine, a company at the forefront of neonatal genomic innovation.

Dr. Thompson has authored over 20 peer-reviewed publications, including an invited publication for the education journal, NeoReviews. She was recently awarded the Mentored Fellow Research Award by the Children's Hospital's Neonatal Consortium.

Upon completion of her training, Dr. Thompson has chosen to remain at Mayo Clinic Children's as a clinical neonatologist, geneticist, bioethicist, clinician-investigator and innovator.

FIRST DO NO HARM...TO OURSELVES

Rahma Warsame, M.D. (I '13, HEMO '16, HEMA '17) Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Warsame is an associate professor of medicine and oncology at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science, and a consultant in the Division of Hematology. She has a special interest in plasma cell disorders, especially amyloidosis, and health services research, including patient-reported outcomes, quality of life and healthcare costs. She serves as the associate program director of the internal medicine residency program and the department diversity leader of the hematology department and the bone marrow transplant clinic.

Dr. Warsame has published more than 60 peer-reviewed articles on these topics, and received several awards and grants, including the Dean's Basic Science Award and the American Society of Clinical Oncology Merit Award.



RADIATION ONCOLOGY TECHNOLOGY

David Routman, M.D. (RADO '20), Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Routman is a consultant in the Department of Radiation Oncology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, with a joint appointment in the Division of Head and Neck Surgery.

Dr. Routman is the co-chair of the Radiation Oncology Information Technology Governance Committee at Mayo Clinic and a member of the Gerstner Scholar Program in AI Translation. He is a member of the Translational Science Committee in the National Cancer Institute.

Dr. Routman's research focuses on personalizing radiation oncology treatment across multiple malignancies by translating advances in science and technology into clinical practice. As a leader in radiation oncology informatics at Mayo Clinic, he leverages data science and emerging technologies to improve quality of care while minimizing treatment-related toxicity. Dr. Routman's work emphasizes patient-reported outcomes, wearable technologies, novel biomarkers, and advances in radiation therapy including proton therapy and automation.

He has received several awards, including:

- Individual Top-Performing Provider Award for Patient Experience from Press Ganey.
- Roentgen Resident/Fellow Research Award from the Radiological Society of North America.
- Outstanding Abstract Travel Award from the American College of Radiation Oncology.

HOPESPHERE: LEVERAGING VIRTUAL REALITY TO ENHANCE HEALTHCARE

Mark Edwin, M.D. (I '94, CMR '95), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Edwin is the chair of the Division of Palliative Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Arizona and board-certified in both Internal Medicine and Palliative Medicine.

Dr. Edwin's clinical practice focuses on patients with serious and complex illnesses including cancer, heart failure, advanced lung disease and ALS. His work focuses on symptom relief and enhancing quality of life for patients with a variety of serious illnesses. His work also has a strong focus on pain management for oncology patients.

Dr. Edwin has received several awards including the Outstanding Palliative Care Award from the Donor Network of America and the Governor's Award for Humanities in Medicine from the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

FROM CHALLENGES TO OPPORTUNITIES: ADDRESSING REPRESENTATION IN MEDICINE

Alyx Porter, M.D. (I1 '04, N '07, NONC '08), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Porter is a consultant in Neurology at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. Dr. Porter's clinical focuses include malignant and benign tumors of the brain and spinal cord and neurological complications of systemic cancer and cancer treatment including brain metastases.

Dr. Porter has developed a national and international reputation for her work in quality of life for patients and caregivers as they navigate the brain cancer journey, as well as her work pertaining to inclusive cancer care. Recognizing that patients enter into the healthcare ecosystem, often at times when they're most vulnerable, fostering belonging and trust is a critical component to Dr. Porter's research efforts ranging from bolstering the workforce to enrollment in clinical trials.



In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Porter is the medical director of the Outpatient Practice at Mayo Clinic in Arizona, vice-Chair of the Clinical Practice Committee, and member of the Executive Operations Team. She also is on the Board of Directors for the American Brain Foundation and Founder of ElevateMeD.

Dr. Porter's many recognitions include receiving the Emerging Leader Award from Temple University's Katz School of Medicine and the Exceptional Women in Medicine Award from Castle Connolly Top Doctors.

ADVANCING BOLD. FORWARD THROUGH CULTURE AND CONNECTION: RECONNECTING PEOPLE, PURPOSE AND PARTNERSHIP

Kristen Wende, Mayo Clinic in Florida

Kristen Wende is a senior leader in Information Technology at Mayo Clinic, currently serving as vice chair supporting Technology Administration and Operations. With more than 30 years at Mayo, she has deep institutional knowledge and a strong track record of advancing enterprise priorities through technology, operational excellence, and people-centered leadership.

In her role, Kristen leads strategic efforts across digital transformation, IT service management, and organizational change in support of Mayo Clinic's multi-site practice. She has contributed to several key initiatives, including the EHR transformation, development of the IT Leadership Development program, and strengthening enterprise vulnerability management capabilities.

Kristen is known for building high-performing teams and fostering a culture grounded in transparency, trust, and continuous improvement. She brings a practical, operational mindset to complex challenges and is a consistent advocate for aligning technology with the needs of patients, staff, and the broader organization.

A certified Prosci Change Management Practitioner and Instructor in Health Care Administration at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science, Kristen is also deeply committed to mentorship and workforce development. She actively supports the growth of emerging leaders and champions efforts to broaden pathways into technology careers, particularly for women and underrepresented groups.

Kristen has been recognized for her contributions with honors including the Mayo Clinic Individual Award for Service Excellence and the Mae Berry Service Excellence Award. Her leadership reflects Mayo Clinic's values, with a focus on collaboration, service, and developing others to meet the future needs of healthcare.

WHY CLAY LIVES ON A CUL'DE-SAC: A DISCUSSION OF RISK AND ITS APPLICATION TO MEDICAL DECISION-MAKING

Clayton Cowl, M.D. (THDC '00), Mayo Clinic in Rochester

Dr. Cowl is the chief of the Section of Transportation Medicine in the Division of Public Health, Infectious Diseases and Occupational Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. He also has a joint appointment in the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine.

Dr. Cowl has served as a senior Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Aviation Medical Examiner for more than two decades and is particularly skilled at assisting and assessing pilots with highly complex medical conditions being considered for medical waivers. He is a fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association and a past president of the Civil Aviation Medical Association. He developed a live and online course for providers performing Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration medical certification exams on commercial truck and bus drivers — and is the editor of the definitive textbook reference on the subject.



Dr. Cowl's research areas include epidemiological work on aviation crash data and altitude physiology, including using Mayo Clinic's altitude chamber facility to test and validate emergency oxygen delivery systems for Boeing and the Department of Defense. He is a co-principal investigator of the Minnesota Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) program that investigates strategies to improve return-to-work paths for ill or injured workers, including those in safety-sensitive roles like commercial driving.

Dr. Cowl has received many awards including the Boothby-Edwards Award from the Aerospace Medical Association and the Master Educator Award from the American College of Chest Physicians.

DONOR-DERIVED INFECTIONS: CHALLENGES IN ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION

Holenarasipur (Vik) Vikram, M.D. (INFD '05), Mayo Clinic Arizona

Dr. Vikram is the medical director of Transplant Infectious Diseases at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. He specializes in diagnosing and treating complex infections in immunocompromised individuals and organ transplant recipients, as well as managing cardiovascular device-associated infections.

Dr. Vikram's research focuses on the incidence of donor-derived infections in solid organ transplants.

He is a recipient of the Keith A. Kelley Distinguished Educator of the Year Award and the Distinguished Educator Award from the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science. He has frequently been named to the Phoenix Top Doctors list by Phoenix Magazine and honored with the Top Provider Recognition Award by Mayo Clinic.

Dr. Vikram holds Fellow status in both the American College of Physicians (FACP) and the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

VALUE OF PERIOPERATIVE MEDICINE: OPTIMIZING OUTCOMES FOR SAFER SURGERY

Joan M. Irizarry-Alvarado, M.D., FACP, DFPM (I '06, CMR '07), Mayo Clinic in Florida

Dr. Irizarry-Alvarado, M.D. is a consultant in Internal Medicine at [Mayo Clinic](#) in Florida. He is nationally recognized for his leadership in perioperative medicine, clinical research, and medical education.

Dr. Irizarry-Alvarado spearheaded and directed the Preoperative Evaluation Clinic Committee, playing a foundational role in expanding clinic services to manage over 90% of Mayo Clinic's surgical patients. He is the chair of the Society of Perioperative Assessment and Quality Improvement Communication Committee.

Dr. Irizarry-Alvarado was named the Distinguished Fellow in Perioperative Medicine by SPAQI and Fellowship in the American College of Physicians. He also is a recipient of the Excellence in Clinical Research Award from the Internal Medicine Residency Program and Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

INTEGRATIVE APPROACHES TO LONGEVITY

Jyoti Patel, M.D. (GIM '25), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Patel is a triple board-certified physician in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Integrative Medicine at Mayo Clinic in Arizona.

Dr. Patel combines scientific rigor with compassionate, whole-person care to help patients achieve sustainable wellness. She specializes in Women's Health, Integrative Medicine, and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.



Dr. Patel's clinical expertise focuses on:

- Nutrition-based strategies to prevent, manage, and reverse chronic conditions
 - Mindfulness and stress-reduction techniques to enhance emotional resilience
 - Personalized, integrative care addressing each patient's unique needs
 - Evidence-guided supplementation in conjunction with lifestyle modifications
 - Collaborative care to optimize, sleep, movement, and complementary therapies
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UNEXPLAINED DYSPNEA: EXPANDING YOUR DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

Jan Stepanek, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.S.M.A., Di.M.M. (I '97, CMR '98), Mayo Clinic in Arizona

Dr. Stepanek is a consultant in the Division of General Internal Medicine with a joint appointment in the Department of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery/Audiology at Mayo Clinic in Arizona.

Dr. Stepanek and his team study the effects of clinical and significant operational problems in the realm of spatial disorientation while in flight, as well as maintenance of balance, cognitive impairment, especially in hypoxia-induced conditions, and prevention of acceleration-induced blackout.

Dr. Stepanek has received many awards including the Arnold D. Tuttle Award, Aerospace Medical Association for the most important journal article in aerospace medicine with the laboratory team, and the Victor A. Prather Award, American Astronautical Society for work on the adverse effects of the high altitude environment on humans, 2012

He is the associate editor of Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine (Clinical Aerospace Medicine section), and serves on the editorial board for Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine.

BOLD. FORWARD. UNBOUND: HOW FUTURE PHYSICAL SPACES AND TECHNOLOGIES IMPROVE CARE, OUTCOMES AND EXPERIENCES

Craig Daniels, M.D. (I'01, CI '03, THDC '04), Mayo Clinic Rochester

Dr. Daniels is a consultant at Mayo Clinic practicing Pulmonary and Critical Care medicine in Rochester, Minnesota. Dr. Daniels is medical director for Bold. Forward. Unbound. in Rochester, which is responsible for aligning strategic capital investments in built spaces and technologies to achieve practice transformation in alignment with Mayo Clinic's 2030. Bold. Forward. strategy.

Dr. Daniels devotes significant effort as a physician leader to advance quality, experience, and outcomes for patients and staff. He serves as enterprise chair for Hospital Practice and is a member of enterprise Clinical Practice and Quality committees. He is vice chair of the Facilities and Capital Coordinating committee in Rochester.

As a physician, scientist and educator Dr. Daniels has focused his clinical practice in medical critical care, advanced diagnostic pulmonary procedures and interstitial lung disease, where his research contributed drug discovery and numerous clinical trials. As an educator Dr. Daniels served as program director for Mayo Clinic's Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship program and has received numerous honors and awards as an exceptional mentor and teacher.
