"The ILCA School of Liver Cancer 2026"

Site:

Hepatology and Liver Transplant Unit,

Austral University Hospital.

Buenos Aires, Argentina.





Regional Context and Rationale: "*The first Latin-American School of Liver Cancer*"

Latin America is a diverse region with a population exceeding 600 million people, characterized by significant ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic heterogeneity. Liver diseases, particularly hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), represent a growing public health challenge, with increasing incidence across the region [1]. Despite this burden, multiple economic, social, and structural barriers continue to limit access to advanced medical education, research, and innovation.

Since 2013, the Latin American Liver Research and Educational Network (LALREAN) has actively promoted epidemiological research, clinical collaboration, and medical education throughout the region [2–4].

We believe that Latin America has substantial potential for growth in liver cancer care. Hosting the **first ILCA School of Liver Cancer in the region** would represent a key opportunity to expand ILCA in Latin America, and gain access to high-level training and strengthen regional expertise in HCC. This initiative will combine in-person academic research training with virtual dissemination through the ECHO platform, enabling knowledge transfer to centers across Latin America and helping overcome existing barriers to education.

By promoting multidisciplinary training, case-based learning, and updates on emerging therapies, this program is expected to improve early diagnosis, staging, and treatment decision-making, ultimately enhancing patient outcomes across the region.

Learning objectives

For fellows, residents and junior faculty:

To acquire tools for clinical research.

To develop evidence-based clinical-decision making process regarding HCC diagnosis, staging and treatment options for each stage.

For faculty and senior staff:

To share educational tools and dynamics able to multiply and expand knowledge from the University sites to the primary care setting.

To up-date clinical-decision making process regarding HCC diagnosis, staging and treatment options.

Who should attend?

Internal Medicine physicians, Gastroenterologists, Hepatologists, Oncologists, Surgeons, Interventional radiologists and fellows and residents.

Basic/Translational and Clinical researchers.

General practitioners, nurses.

[1] Chan SL, Sun HC, Xu Y, Zeng H, El-Serag HB, Lee JM, et al. The Lancet Commission on addressing the global hepatocellular carcinoma burden: comprehensive strategies from prevention to treatment. The Lancet 2025;406:731–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(25)01042-6.
[2] Anders M, Mattos AZ, Debes JD, Beltran O, Coste P, Marín JI, et al. Latin American expert opinion letter on the feasibility of systemic therapies in combination with locoregional therapies for hepatocellular carcinoma. Ann Hepatol 2025:101905. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aohep.2025.101905.
[3] Telli FD, Hidalgo JMP, Varón A, Castro L, Tapia NC, Piñero F. Key points for imaging diagnosis and response assessment for hepatocellular carcinoma in Latin America. Ann Hepatol 2024;29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aohep.2024.101514.
[4] Piñero F, Poniachik J, Ridruejo E, Silva M. Hepatocellular carcinoma in Latin America: Diagnosis and treatment challenges. World J Gastroenterol 2018;24:4224–9. https://doi.org/10.3748/wjg.v24.i37.4224.

1- SPEAKERS

Leading this initiative:

Federico Piñero (Liver Unit, Austral University Hospital, Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member

Manuel Mendizabal (Head of Hepatology section, Austral University Hospital, Argentina) - ALEH & ILCA member

Marcelo Silva (Liver Unit, Austral University Hospital, Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member

Local Staff:

Gustavo Podestá (Co-Medical Director, Head of Surgery Department, Austral University Hospital, Argentina)

Martín Fauda (Head of Liver and Pancreatic transplant programs, Austral University Hospital, Argentina)

Josefina Pages (Liver Unit, Austral University Hospital, Argentina) ALEH member

Nicolas Marcolini (Oncology, Austral University Hospital, Argentina)

Marcela Carballido (Oncology, Austral University Hospital, Argentina)

Argentina:

Adrian Gadano (Hospital Italiano, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2nd Vice-President ALEH)

Margarita Anders (Hospital Alemán, Buenos Aires, Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member

Paola Casciato (Hospital Italiano, Buenos Aires, Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member

Ignacio Roca (Hospital El Cruce, Buenos Aires, Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member

Juan Carlos Spina (Hospital Italiano, Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Latin America

Leonardo da Fonseca (Oncologist, Institute of Liver Cancer Program, Sao Paulo University Hospital) – ILCA member

Aline Chagas (Hepatology and Liver Transplant Unit, Sao Paulo University Hospital) – ALEH member

Josemaria Menendez (Hepatologist, Uruguay. ALEH, SIG Liver tumors coordinator) – ALEH member

Pablo Coste (Hepatologist, Costa Rica. ALEH, SIG Liver tumor member) – ALEH member

Hugo Cheinquer (Hepatologist, Brazil. ALEH, SIG Liver tumor member) – ALEH & ILCA member

International Speakers

Amit Singal (University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, United States of America) – ILCA Secretary.

Josepmaria Argemí (Navarra University, Pamplona, Spain) – ILCA member

2- PROGRAMME: DATES 3rd and 4th DECEMBER 2026

First Day (Thursday 3rd December 2026)

9.00 – 10.15	**Session 1: Liver Research in Latin America: is it possible?** **Chairs:** *Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ALEH & ILCA member* *Marcelo Silva (Argentina)– ILCA member*
9.00 – 9:30	***Limitations and lessons in HCC clinical study designs.*** *Amit Singal (USA)– ILCA member*
9.30 – 9.50	***How to write a good quality paper?*** ***LATAM publishing records: is it possible to publish in high impact factor journals?*** *Adrian Gadano (Argentina)– ALEH 2nd Vice-President*
9.50 – 10.30	***Beyond hazard ratios: interpreting trial endpoints and survival analysis in systemic therapy for hepatocellular carcinoma.*** *Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ILCA member*
10:30 – 10:50	**Q & A**
10:50 – 11:20	***Coffee break.***
11.20 – 13.00	**Session 3: Epidemiology & Surveillance of Liver Cancer.** **Chairs:** *Josemaria Menendez (Uruguay– ALEH member)* *Adrian Gadano (Argentina– ALEH 2nd Vice-President)*
11.20 – 11:35	***Changing epidemiology for HCC: actual trends and changing treatment effect. Is this true?*** *Marcelo Silva (Argentina)– ILCA member*
11.35 – 12:05	***Changing modalities for HCC & cholangiocarcinoma surveillance: how can these be applied in clinical practice?*** *Amit Singal (USA)– ILCA member*
12.05 – 12.30	**Q & A**
12.35 – 14.00	**Lunch Break**
14.00 – 15.00	**Session 4: Liver cancer diagnosis & staging.** **Clinical Case Scenarios. Mutidisciplinary discussion session.** **Chair:** *Josefina Pages (Argentina)- ALEH member* **Panel of Discussion:** *Josemaria Menendez (Uruguay, ALEH member); Margarita Anders (Argentina, ALEH & ILCA member); Pablo Coste (Costa Rica, ALEH member); Juan Carlos Spina (Argentina)*
14.00 – 14.30	*Case 1: Surveillance vs Screening Failure.* ***Is it a problem of the screening tool or the surveillance policy?*** *Case Presentation: Pablo Coste (Costa Rica) – ALEH member*
14.30 – 15.00	*Case 2: Agreement & disagreement rate of Li-RADS for liver tumors.* ***Li-RADS: is this the solution for imaging reports?*** *Case Presentation: Juan Carlos Spina (Argentina)*
15.00 – 15:30	**Coffe-break**

15.30 – 16:00	***State-of-the art lecture: BEACON vs BCLC or other clinical-decision making algorithms.*** *Amit Singal (USA)– ILCA Secretary.*
16.00 – 17:20	**Session 5: The evolving landscape of therapy for liver cancer for early stages.** **PRO & CONs: Mutidisciplinary discussion session.** **Chairs:** *Gabriel Aballay Soteras (Argentina) – ILCA member* *Marcelo Silva (Austral University Hospital, Argentina)– ILCA member*
16.00 – 16:15	***PRO: Immunotherapy and the concept of "treatable tumor regression": I go for it!*** *Hugo Cheinquer (Brazil)– ALEH-ILCA member*
16.15 – 16:30	***CONs: Immunotherapy and the concept of "treatable tumor regression": I don´t go for it!*** *Josepmaria Argemi (Spain)– ILCA member*
16.30 – 16:50	***Neo/Adjuvant therapies for HCC and cholangiocarcinoma.*** *Nicolás Marcolini (Oncology, Austral University Hospital, Argentina)*
16.50 – 17:10	**Q & A**

Second Day (Friday 4th December 2026)

9.00 – 10.00	**Session 6: Hot topic debates in cholangio & HCC.** **Chair:** *Manuel Mendizabal (Argentina) – ALEH & ILCA member*
9.00 – 9:20	***Immunotherapy before liver transplantation for HCC: risk-benefit ratio.*** *Aline Chagas (Brazil)– ALEH member*
9.20 – 9.40	***Surgery vs liver transplantation for cholangiocarcinoma: patient selection and outcomes.*** *Martín Fauda (Argentina)*
9.40 – 10.00	**Q & A**
10.00 – 10.20	**Coffe-break**
10.20 – 11.30	**Session 7: Loco regional therapies for Liver Cancer.** **Chairs:** *Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ALEH & ILCA member* *Paola Casciato (Argentina)– ALEH & ILCA member*
	Clinical Case Scenarios Discussion **Case presentation:** *Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ILCA member* Clinical Case 1: Cirrhotic patient with 1 single lesion 8 cm, with vascular invasion. Clinical Case 2: No radiological response after 2nd TACE: should we keep *pushing*? Clinical Case 3: Immunotherapy in combination with TACE or SIRT. ***Round Table - Mutidisciplinary Panel:*** *J Argemí, P Coste, P Casciato, A Chagas.*
11.30 – 12.50	**Session 8: Systemic treatment for advanced liver cancer.** **Chairs:** *Ignacio Roca (Argentina)- ALEH member* *Gabriel Aballay Soteras (Argentina) – ILCA member*
10.50 – 11.10	***Choosing the best 1st line therapy: Which one and to whom?*** *Leonardo da Fonseca (Sao Paulo University Hospital, Brazil)– ILCA member*
11.10 – 11.50	***Case presentation: management of adverse events.*** *Dr Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ALEH & ILCA member* *Leonardo da Fonseca (Sao Paulo University Hospital, Brazil)– ILCA member* ***Round Table Mutidisciplinary Panel:*** *L da Fonseca, J Argemi. – ILCA members*
11.50 – 12.10	***Update on systemic therapy for biliary cancer.*** *Marcela Carballido (Argentina)*
12.10 – 12.30	***HCC progression after first or second line: what is next?*** *Josepmaria Argemi (Spain)– ILCA member*
12.30 – 12.50	**Q & A**
12:50 – 13:00	**Closing remarks & ceremony.** *Dr Federico Piñero (Argentina)– ALEH & ILCA member*