



FORTEe

Get strong to fight childhood cancer: An exercise intervention for children and adolescents undergoing anti-cancer treatment

H2020 – 945153

D6.7 Consensus-conference for the use of exercise training in paediatric oncology

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Abbreviations

AR	Augmented reality
CAYA-C	Children, adolescents and young adults undergoing anti-cancer treatment
D	Deliverable
EU	European Union
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
H2020	Horizon 2020 (funding framework of the European Union from 2014-2020)
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JGU	Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
KKH	Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V.
NAOK	Netzwerk ActiveOncoKids
PEOC	Paediatric Exercise Oncology Congress
PU	Public (<i>dissemination level of this deliverable report</i>)
RP	Reporting period
SIOP	International Society of Paediatric Oncology
UK	United Kingdom
UMC-Mainz	University Medical Center Mainz
USA	United States of America
WP	Work Package

1. Executive Summary

The FORTEe trial is a multi-centre randomised controlled study evaluating a supervised exercise intervention in children, adolescents, and young adults undergoing cancer treatment (CAYA-C).

Within Work Package 6 (WP6) “Dissemination, Exploitation, Knowledge Management,” FORTEe co-organised, in collaboration with the Paediatric Exercise Oncology Congress (PEOC), previously held exclusively online, the **first in-person congress “PEOC × FORTEe 2026” in Mainz, Germany, from 16-17 April 2026**. The University Medical Center of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (UMC-Mainz) led the organisation and implementation of this event. This event fulfils the completion of **Deliverable D6.6 - Consensus-conference for the use of exercise training in paediatric oncology**.

The congress was embedded into a broader FORTEe event week, taking place between the 6th General Assembly Meeting (15 April 2026) and the patient-focused “Kickin’ Cancer” event (18 April 2026, please view the public deliverable report *D6.6 - Second patient and layman event*), thereby fostering integrated scientific exchange and community engagement.

Planning for PEOC × FORTEe 2026 began in February 2024 (Month 36) of reporting period 2 (RP2) and continued throughout RP3 into early RP4. A joint Scientific Committee was established to define the congress scope, review abstracts, and shape the programme. The Call for Abstracts was launched on 7th July 2025, attracting a broad range of high-quality submissions. A dedicated [congress website and submission/registration platform](#) were developed using ‘Converia’, ensuring a smooth and professional experience for all speakers and attendees.

The congress itself commenced with a joint welcome from the Congress Presidents, **PD Dr rer medic Miriam Götte, Prof Dr Nicole Culos-Reed, and Prof Dr Jörg Faber**. Throughout the two-day event, the scientific agenda featured **three keynote lectures** delivered by distinguished international experts. **Dr David Mizrahi** from Sydney, Australia, inaugurated the congress with his keynote entitled “Revolutionizing Recovery: The Power of Digital and Community-Based Exercise for Childhood Cancer Survivors.” The second keynote was presented by FORTEe consortium member **Prof Dr Alejandro Lucia Mulas** from Madrid, Spain, who addressed “Immunology and Practical Consequences.” The programme concluded with **Dr Keri Schadler** from Houston, United States of America (USA), who provided valuable insights into “Exercise Impacts the Tumor Microenvironment and Response to Therapy.” In addition to the keynotes, the programme included multiple **research presentation sessions**, comprising both oral presentations and rapid talks selected through a competitive abstract submission process. An invited **symposium** featuring speakers from Munich, Germany (**PD Dr rer medic Sabine Kesting** and **Prof Dr Dr Irene Teichert-von Lüttichau** accompanied by a **patient representative**) and Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (**Dr Precious Madzimbe**) further enriched the scientific discourse by offering a diverse, global perspective. Interactive elements such as the “**Meet the Experts**” lunch sessions, dedicated networking breaks and the “**Congress Dinner – FORTEe Science Evening**” were integral in fostering engagement and collaboration among participants.

The congress served as a dynamic forum to present FORTEe research outcomes alongside the latest findings and innovations from the wider field of paediatric exercise oncology, integrating FORTEe results into the current scientific landscape. By uniting academic excellence with clinical relevance, the event fostered cross-disciplinary dialogue, encouraged international collaboration, and advanced the translation of evidence-based exercise interventions into clinical practice. This way, the PEOC × FORTEe 2026 Conference contributed significantly to the visibility, sustainability, scientific consensus, and long-term impact of the FORTEe project across Europe and beyond.

Researchers, clinicians, and stakeholders from Europe and beyond were invited to attend PEOC × FORTEe 2026. In addition to the scientific community, representatives from **partner institutions, early-career researchers, students, and patient organisation members** were engaged. Special emphasis was placed on cross-border participation, with attendees coming from multiple FORTEe partner countries, fostering international dialogue and cooperation.

The congress also facilitated internal project exchange: study personnel from all participating clinical centres in the FORTEe consortium were invited, enhancing interdisciplinary knowledge sharing and bridging research with clinical practice. Moreover, **local hospital staff, including paediatric oncologists, exercise scientists, physiotherapists, nurses, and allied health professionals** actively contributed to a well-rounded and practice-oriented programme.

A dedicated organisational team supported onsite event logistics, including registration and speaker coordination. The congress attracted media representatives, policy stakeholders, sports ambassadors, and institutional supporters, underscoring the growing societal relevance of exercise interventions in paediatric oncology.

To ensure broad dissemination, a summary of the event and its key messages was prepared and distributed within a [FORTEe newsletter](#) on 12th May 2026, following the congress. The event not only advanced the academic discourse in paediatric exercise oncology but also visibly strengthened the network of institutions and individuals dedicated to improving supportive cancer care through structured physical activity.

In total, people from **over 24 countries** registered for the congress and **more than 140 participants attended the event**, including researchers, clinicians, exercise professionals, early-career scientists, policymakers, and patient representatives.

2. The “PEOC × FORTEe 2026 Congress - Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation in Paediatric Exercise Oncology”

The clinical FORTEe trial is a multi-centre, randomised controlled study designed to evaluate the effects of a supervised exercise intervention in children, adolescents, and young adults undergoing anti-cancer treatment (CAYA-C). Participants were randomly assigned to either an experimental group receiving a structured exercise intervention or a control group receiving standard care.

Within Work Package 6 (WP6) “Dissemination, Exploitation, Knowledge Management,” the FORTEe project co-organised an international scientific congress on paediatric exercise oncology in close collaboration with the established Paediatric Exercise Oncology Congress (PEOC), which had previously been conducted twice, exclusively in an online format. The inaugural in-person congress, “**PEOC × FORTEe 2026 – Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation in Paediatric Exercise Oncology**”, took place on **16-17 April 2026 in Mainz, Germany**. The congress was strategically embedded within a cluster of FORTEe activities: it followed the 6th FORTEe General Assembly (15-16 April) and directly preceded the patient and layperson event “Kickin’ Cancer” (18 April), thereby creating a full week dedicated to scientific exchange, collaboration, and community engagement.

This aligns directly with the central pillar of FORTEe’s dissemination strategy: to effectively communicate the project’s innovative approach, methodologies, and scientific outcomes, with the overarching goal of achieving broad outreach and impact across Europe and beyond. Through the PEOC x FORTEe Congress 2026, the research objectives of the FORTEe trial, as well as the broader ambitions of paediatric exercise oncology, were showcased. The event aimed

- to **disseminate robust evidence** supporting an innovative, patient-centred exercise treatment;
- to **consolidate and connect leading expertise** at a European level and beyond;
- to **advance the field of exercise oncology** and **promote translational research**;
- and ultimately, to **establish paediatric exercise oncology as an evidence-based standard of care**, fully integrated into clinical practice for all childhood cancer patients across the EU and internationally.

1.1 Planning of the “PEOC x FORTEe 2026” Congress

The groundwork for the organisation of PEOC × FORTEe 2026 had already begun in September and October 2023, with initial discussions on the planned events held in close collaboration with the local non-profit childhood cancer organisation **Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz e.V. (KKH)**. These early exchanges focused on developing the overarching concept for a **joint congress cluster and consensus discussions**, outlining the foundational objectives, structure, and target groups of the planned FORTEe activities. Central elements defined at this stage included: the goals for internal scientific exchange within the consortium (General Assembly Meeting), the overarching vision for an international paediatric exercise oncology congress (PEOC × FORTEe 2026), and the idea of linking these events with a patient- and family-centred activity day (Kickin’ Cancer – Every move counts!).

As part of this exploratory phase, initial inquiries were made to assess the feasibility of hosting the events in Mainz. This included early contact with the Hyatt Regency Mainz to evaluate venue availability. In addition, first potential sponsors (e.g. Thyssen Foundation) were approached regarding support for selected components of the events, such as congress materials, badges and lanyards, or individual programme elements. These outreach efforts laid important groundwork for later financial planning, stakeholder engagement, and logistical coordination.

The joint planning and organisation of PEOC × FORTEe 2026 officially commenced in February 2024. On 1 February 2024, the FORTEe study leads at UMC-Mainz hosted the formal online kick-off meeting, bringing together interested **FORTEe partners**, **KKH**, the national **Network ActiveOncoKids (NAOK)**,

and candidates for the PEOC Scientific Committee. The meeting served to formalise the collaboration, explore synergies, discuss thematic priorities, identify key stakeholders, and clarify initial organisational considerations, including potential conference venues, accommodation options, and structural requirements.

During February 2024, potential candidates for both the **PEOC Scientific Committee** and the **PEOC Organisational Committee** were identified, and initial suggestions for keynote / masterclass speakers and invited talks were gathered.

In mid-April 2024, the PEOC × FORTEe Scientific Committee was formally established, a joint committee led by PD Dr rer medic Sabine Kesting, PD Dr rer medic Miriam Götte, Prof Dr Nicole Culos-Reed, Dr med Marie Neu, and Univ.-Prof Dr med Jörg Faber, and created in close collaboration with the established PEOC Scientific Committee. The committee consisted of experienced exercise professionals, physicians, psychologists, and nursing scientists and was responsible for defining the scientific scope of the congress, reviewing abstracts, and shaping the programme.

In parallel, an Organisational Committee chaired by Prof Dr Jörg Faber and supported by the research management company concentris was formed. Comprising experienced exercise professionals and physicians, this committee assumed responsibility for the logistical planning and operational execution of the event.

Working closely with concentris, both committees began outlining the core organisational needs of the congress: collecting requirements for conference services (for formal offers), exploring funding needs and opportunities, agreeing on the general structure of the event, and identifying essential organisational and technical requirements. A shared planning spreadsheet was set up to streamline coordination, track action items, and document responsibilities and timelines.

In October 2024, the decision was made to request an offer from Converia. [Converia](#) is an all-in-one conference and event management software platform designed to streamline every phase of an academic or professional conference, from participant registration and abstract submission to programme planning, payment processing, and on-site check-in. Fully General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)-compliant and hosted on ISO 27001-certified servers in Germany (ISO, International Organization for Standardization), it empowers organisers to run virtual, hybrid or in-person events efficiently while safeguarding attendee data.

Throughout the remainder of 2024, both committees met regularly and maintained close communication via email and phone. Their work focused on refining the conceptual framework, identifying internationally renowned experts in paediatric exercise oncology and related fields, and initiating first invitations for keynote talks and symposia.

A major milestone was reached at the end of January 2025, when the final contract was signed with the **Hyatt Regency Mainz**, confirming it as the official venue for the PEOC × FORTEe 2026 Congress. Its modern conference infrastructure, flexible meeting spaces, and central location along the Rhine provided an ideal environment for the congress and associated events.



Figure 1. Hyatt Regency Mainz – Official Venue of the PEOC × FORTEe 2026 Congress

Image source: <https://www.guestreservations.com/hyatt-regency-mainz/booking?msclkid=51d362bac3301abae5510a0f9fd6e622>

In April 2025, the **historic ‘Eulchen Brewery’** in the heart of Mainz was confirmed as the venue for the congress dinner and **“FORTEe Science Evening”**. These events aim to offer participants a relaxed, authentic local atmosphere that encourages networking between researchers, clinicians, early-career professionals, and patient advocates.



Figure 2. Logo of the Eulchen Brewery – Venue of the Congress Dinner and FORTEe Science Evening

<https://www.eulchen-bier.de/>

Parallel to venue confirmations, detailed scientific and logistical planning continued. Committees progressively refined the congress agenda, coordinated session formats, and confirmed speakers. Invitations to international experts were sent, aiming for a diverse, high-calibre scientific programme that highlights cutting-edge research, fosters interdisciplinary exchange, and strengthens international collaboration.

In spring 2025, **Converia** was officially adopted as the **congress platform for abstract submission, registration, programme management, and attendee communication**. The platform was used via Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU), and a formal data processing agreement (*Auftragsverarbeitungsvertrag* in German) was established to govern its use. This agreement, which was finalised and signed in November 2025, ensures that all data processing within Converia complies with GDPR requirements and secures the proper handling of personal data for the congress.

In May 2025, preparatory work was carried out to organise the conference check-in and onsite attendee management via the Converia platform. For this purpose, a registration system was established, allowing participants’ registrations to be verified at the check-in desks and name badges to be printed on site.

The abstract submission for the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 Congress was officially launched on 7th July 2025, providing researchers and clinicians with a user-friendly and secure interface to submit their contributions. The launch marked a key milestone in the scientific planning process, enabling international participants to share their latest findings in the field of paediatric exercise oncology and contribute to the development of the congress programme. Abstract submission was open from 07th July until 30th September 2025.

In mid-August, the congress website was further updated and expanded to provide comprehensive information about the event and its host city, Mainz. These updates included key details such as congress dates, registration information, important deadlines, venue information, accommodation options, travel guidance, and general recommendations for attendees, ensuring clear communication and accessibility for participants from across Europe and beyond.

With the conclusion of the abstract submission phase at the end of September, the review process was initiated by the Scientific Committee and successfully completed in November 2025. A total of 59 abstracts were submitted, all of which demonstrated outstanding scientific quality and contributed significant value to the conference programme. Among these, nine contributions originated from different FORTEe partners, highlighting the consortium's active scientific involvement.

The accepted contributions were assigned to one of three presentation formats: **poster contributions (n = 41), rapid oral presentations (n = 10), and research presentations (n = 8)** at PEOC x FORTEe 2026. Based on the outcomes of the review process, the conference programme was further refined and finalised in December 2025, ensuring a high-quality and scientifically diverse line-up of presentations. From the accepted abstracts, a substantial number of abstracts were selected to be submitted as an abstract booklet for a **special issue in Current Oncology**. Corresponding **PEOC x FORTEe posters will be prominently displayed on the project website** as soon as the abstract booklet has been accepted and published.

By December 2025, the final steps for opening participant registration were completed: the payment processing setup, data protection and legal compliance (GDPR), terms and conditions, and all related documentation were finalised. With these components in place, the official registration for PEOC x FORTEe 2026 opened on 1 December 2025, marking another key milestone in the preparation of the congress.

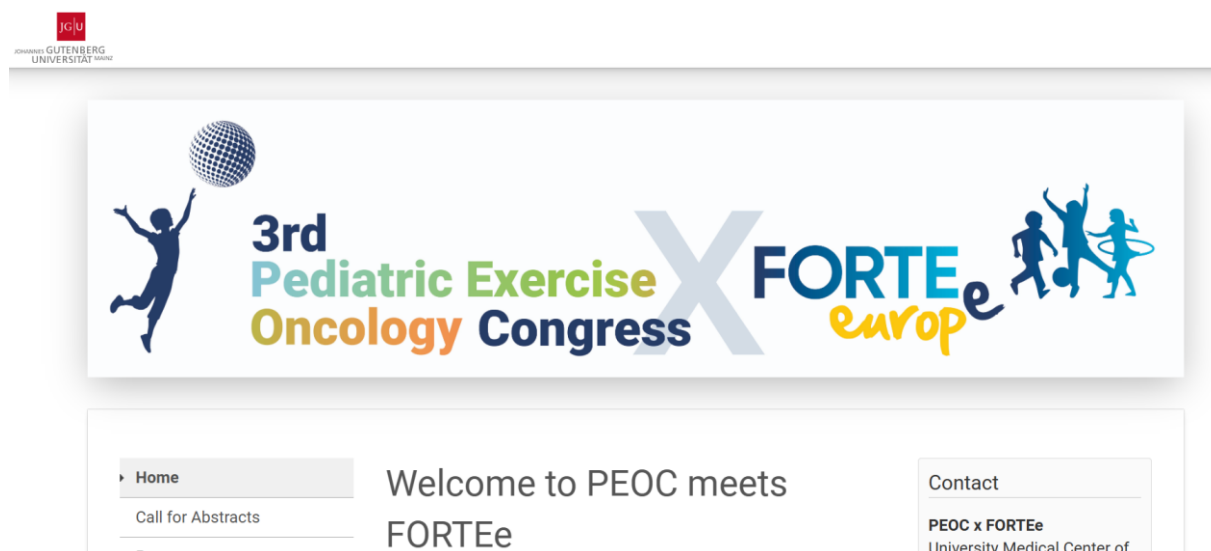


Figure 3. PEOC x FORTEe 2026 Congress Website - Hosted on the Converia Event Management Platform
https://converia.uni-mainz.de/frontend/index.php?folder_id=1128&page_id=

Thanks to close collaboration with the local non-profit organisation KKH and the network NAOK, as well as the dedicated efforts of the Scientific Committee Lead, it was possible to secure additional (external) financial support that significantly enhanced the inclusivity and recognition of the congress. Through this partnership, the **“KKH Mainz – Award for Young Investigators”** was established to acknowledge and encourage the contributions of early-career researchers in the field of paediatric exercise oncology. The award was open to all presenters aged 35 or younger at the time of the congress and was granted in two categories: **Best Oral Presentation and Best Poster Presentation**. Each award was endowed with a prize of €750. This initiative not only promotes scientific excellence among emerging researchers but also supports their active participation in the international research community.

In addition, we received a grant from **the Thyssen Foundation**. Therefore, it was possible to cover congress-related costs such as conference incidental expenses (e.g. conference banners, lanyards, and other printed materials that help promote the conference), as well as the costs for invited speakers in full, including registration fees, hotel and travel costs. This funding was secured through the coordinated sponsoring efforts of the Scientific Committee Leads, in collaboration with the NAOK, and formalised via a sponsorship agreement with the **“Stiftung Universitätsmedizin Essen”** (Foundation of the University Medical Center Essen), which was responsible for the sponsorship contract with the Thyssen Foundation. The formal cooperation agreement with the **“Stiftung Universitätsmedizin Essen”** was signed in December 2025, regulating the collaboration between the involved parties regarding sponsorship acquisition and the use of funds. By covering congress-related costs for invited speakers, including registration fees, the support enabled the involvement of leading international experts. As a result, the congress benefited from a diverse and high-calibre speaker line-up, significantly enriching the scientific programme and strengthening interdisciplinary exchange at the highest level.

These measures reflect the shared commitment of all organising partners to create a congress with the potential to be not only scientifically outstanding but also inclusive, supportive, and community-oriented.

In the final months and weeks leading up to the congress, key organisational steps were completed to ensure a smooth implementation. This included the arrangement of event insurance covering all participants, the finalisation of the venue setup in close coordination with the location, and detailed planning meetings with the members of the organisational support team. During this phase, concrete schedules and work plans were developed to ensure clear responsibilities and efficient on-site execution.

In the days immediately preceding the congress, the local organisational team was actively involved in on-site preparations, including the assembly of the venue setup, the collection and integration of speaker presentations into the final congress programme, as well as the preparation of the stage, seating arrangements, and technical equipment. In addition, the registration area, cloakroom, and signage were set up to ensure a smooth and welcoming start to the event.

The detailed agenda of the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress can be found in [Annex 1](#).

2.1 Announcement and promotion of the “PEOC x FORTEe 2026”

Public promotion activities for the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress officially commenced in April 2025, allowing for a full year of outreach to the scientific community and the development of a comprehensive programme with opportunities for exchange, collaboration, and discussion.

The promotion of “PEOC x FORTEe 2026 – Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation in Paediatric Exercise Oncology” was carried out through a comprehensive and strategically coordinated communication campaign to ensure maximum visibility and engagement across diverse audiences. Beginning in April 2025, an English-language digital and printed **“Save the Date” card** was disseminated

In addition, the printed “Save the Date” cards were distributed in person at key international and national conferences, including the International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) 2025 Congress in Budapest and other specialist meetings in paediatric oncology, exercise science, and rehabilitation. This on-site dissemination reinforced broader outreach efforts and helped generate early interest and visibility for the congress within the professional community.

SAVE THE DATE!

16 to 17 April 2026
Mainz, Germany

+ Patient Sports Day
on 16 April 2026
„Kickin' Cancer –
Every Move Counts“

Stronger together:

X

PEOC meets FORTEe

Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation
in Pediatric Exercise Oncology

Welcome to Mainz!

Join us for the **3rd Pediatric Exercise Oncology Congress**
in collaboration with the **FORTEe Project**

– where global experts, researchers, and clinicians come together to shape the future of pediatric exercise oncology.

What to Expect

- Cutting-edge research presentations
- Interactive expert panels & sessions
- Network with leading international, interdisciplinary professionals
- Practical insights into integrating exercise into pediatric oncology care
- Poster session with discussion
- Social program

Who Should Attend?

- Exercise professionals
- Pediatric oncologists, nurses & other healthcare professionals
- Researchers & students
- Patient advocates & stakeholders

Confirmed Speakers

David Mizrahi (Australia)
Carmen Flua-Luces (Spain)
Keri Schadler (USA)
Martin Kaj Fridh (Denmark)
Precious Madzimbwe (Zimbabwe)

Stay Connected

Scan the QR code on the front to get updates on:

- Congress registration & call for abstracts
- Scientific & social program
- Travel tips & accommodation

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Contact & Info

forte@uni-mainz.de
www.forteinmainz.de/neoc

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To complement these efforts, targeted email campaigns reached out directly to relevant international and national congress organisers, professional associations, research institutions, and stakeholder organisations when the call for abstracts was opened on 07th July 2025. They were asked to promote the abstract submission of the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress through their **newsletters, online event calendars, member mailing lists, and internal communication channels**. This coordinated approach leveraged existing platforms within paediatric oncology, exercise science, rehabilitation, and patient advocacy to reach a broad and diverse audience across Europe and beyond.

**Call for abstracts
now open!**

07.07. - 30.09.25

Stronger together:

 **3rd
Pediatric Exercise
Oncology Congress**

FORTE
EUROPE 

PEOC meets FORTEe

**Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation
in Pediatric Exercise Oncology**

Scan code for more info:



Figure 5. Call for abstracts for the congress “PEOC × FORTEe 2026 - Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation in Paediatric Exercise Oncology”.

Throughout the lead-up to the event, numerous posts were published across multiple social media platforms, featuring content designed to engage a wide audience, including researchers, healthcare professionals, patients and their families, early-career scientists, and the broader paediatric oncology and exercise communities. These posts highlighted key information about the congress, including important dates and deadlines, confirmed keynote speakers, abstract submission guidelines, venue details, and social programme highlights. They also featured engaging visuals and reminders to register, helping to build momentum and maintain interest within the target audience. This multi-channel communication approach significantly increased visibility and engagement with the congress, effectively reaching both local and international scientific and clinical communities, as well as patient and advocacy networks.

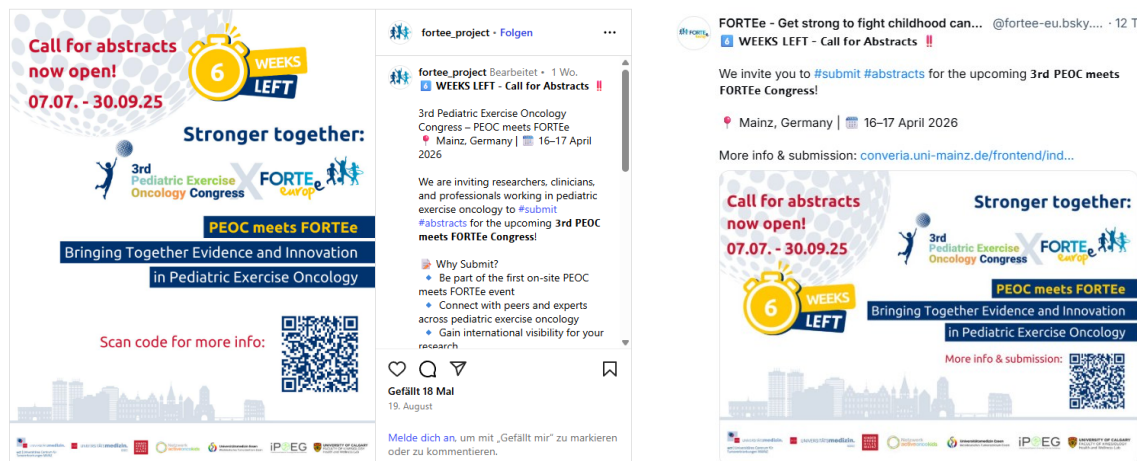


Figure 6. The FORTEe official social media channels, KKH, NAOK, and the social media accounts of FORTEe partner organizations actively shared information and invitations to the first PEOC × FORTEe 2026 conference. In addition, members of the Scientific Committee supported outreach efforts by promoting the event through their own institutional and professional social media networks, further amplifying visibility and extending the reach to a broader international audience.

Invitees to the congress included internationally renowned **experts in the fields of paediatric oncology, exercise science, rehabilitation, and survivorship research**. Special attention was given to ensuring a balanced representation across disciplines, geographical regions, gender and career stages. **Keynote speakers, symposium contributors, and session chairs** were carefully selected based on their scientific excellence, clinical expertise, and active engagement in translational research. Many of the invited speakers have played a leading role in shaping the field of paediatric exercise oncology and continue to contribute significantly to advancing evidence-based care for children, adolescents, and young adults affected by cancer. **Media representatives, sports ambassadors,** and local as well as **national stakeholders** were also invited to contribute to the success and visibility of the event.

The event was further supported by a dedicated organisational team who provided substantial assistance with the planning, coordination, and on-site logistics. In particular, in the days leading up to the congress, the team played a key role in the on-site preparation, including the set-up of the venue, the installation of banners and signage, and the preparation of the registration desk and related materials. Their hands-on support ensured a smooth and well-structured start to the event and contributed significantly to the overall organisation and execution of the congress.

1.2 Execution of the event

The congress commenced on Thursday, 16 April 2026, with opening remarks by the **Congress Presidents, PD Dr rer medic Miriam Götte, Prof Dr Nicole Culos-Reed, and Prof Dr Jörg Faber**, who welcomed the international participants and highlighted the overarching aims of the meeting: to bring together evidence and innovation in paediatric exercise oncology.



Figure 7. Opening of the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 Congress on 16 April 2026, with welcoming remarks by the Congress Presidents PD Dr rer medic Miriam Götte, Prof Dr Nicole Culos-Reed, and Prof Dr Jörg Faber, who introduced the aims of the meeting to advance evidence and innovation in paediatric exercise oncology.

Their introduction was followed by a presentation from **Dr Marie Neu and MSc Elias Dreismickenbecker**, who provided in-depth **insights into the FORTEe project**. The presentation covered the overall study design and methodological framework of the clinical trial, including the implementation of precision-based exercise interventions for children, adolescents, and young adults undergoing anti-cancer treatment.

In addition, both quantitative and qualitative results of the FORTEe study were presented for the first time, highlighting key findings related to the feasibility, effectiveness, and patient experiences of the intervention. An emphasis was also placed on the integration and successful application of digital tools within the study, which supported intervention delivery even in the outpatient and home setting.

Overall, the presentation offered a comprehensive overview of the project's scientific approach and outcomes, while underlining the importance of exercise in paediatric oncology.



Figure 8. Presentation by Dr Marie Neu and MSc Elias Dreismickenbecker on the FORTEe project, showcasing the implementation and evaluation of exercise interventions for children and adolescents undergoing anti-cancer treatment.

This set the stage for the first keynote lecture by **Dr David Mizrahi (Sydney, Australia)**, entitled **“Revolutionizing Recovery: The Power of Digital and Community-Based Exercise for Childhood Cancer Survivors”**. Dr Mizrahi is a Senior Research Fellow and Accredited Exercise Physiologist at The Daffodil Centre, whose work focuses on integrating exercise into cancer care. In his keynote, Dr Mizrahi highlighted the transformative potential of integrating structured exercise programmes into standard cancer care, with a particular focus on improving accessibility through digital delivery formats and community-based approaches. He emphasised how remotely delivered interventions, combined with supervised in-hospital and community programmes, can help overcome common barriers to participation and enable broader reach, particularly for paediatric populations.

Overall, the keynote provided a forward-looking perspective on how innovation in digital health and community integration can expand access to exercise interventions and sustainably improve the health and well-being of children and adolescents affected by cancer.



Figure 9. Dr David Mizrahi (Sydney, Australia) delivering his keynote lecture on the transformative role of digital and community-based exercise programs in the recovery of childhood cancer survivors.

The afternoon concluded with an **interactive poster reception**, which provided a dedicated and informal setting for scientific exchange and networking among participants. Presenting authors were available at their posters to discuss their research in detail, facilitating direct dialogue, in-depth feedback, and the exploration of potential collaborations. The format encouraged active engagement between researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders, thereby fostering interdisciplinary exchange and strengthening connections within the paediatric exercise oncology community.



Figure 10. Participants engaging in the interactive poster reception, fostering scientific exchange and networking opportunities. Hayley Marriott of the FORTEe Team in Oxford, United Kingdom (UK), presented her work on the FORTEe Augmented Reality (AR) app, which was distributed as part of the FORTEe project.

In the evening, the **“Congress Dinner and FORTEe Science Evening”** provided an informal setting for social interaction, networking, and reflection among participants of the paediatric exercise oncology community. The programme included brief opening remarks, a reflective talk on key achievements in the field, and an outlook on future developments and perspectives for exercise oncology in paediatric cancer care across Europe, before concluding with final closing remarks by the conference president.



Figure 11. Attendees enjoying the Congress Dinner and FORTEe Science Evening, fostering informal social interactions and the strengthening of professional networks.

On Friday, 17 April 2026, the scientific programme began with a keynote lecture and FORTEe masterclass by **Prof Dr Alejandro Lucia Mulas (Madrid, Spain)**, who delivered a presentation on current evidence regarding the immunological effects of exercise and their clinical implications in oncology, prepared in collaboration with **Dr Carmen Fiuza-Luces**.

Prof Dr Lucia Mulas is a leading exercise physiologist and internationally recognised researcher in the field of exercise oncology, with extensive expertise in the biological and systemic effects of physical activity in clinical populations. In his keynote, he outlined key mechanisms through which exercise may modulate immune function and discussed the relevance of these findings for paediatric cancer care, bridging translational evidence with practical applications in clinical exercise interventions.



Figure 12. Prof Dr Alejandro Lucia Mulas (Madrid, Spain) delivering his keynote lecture and FORTEe masterclass on the immunological effects of exercise and their practical implications.

The morning progressed with a session of research presentations on **“Physical Function from Diagnosis to Survivorship”**, chaired by **MSc Elias Dreismickenbecker** and **Dr Maxime Caru**. The session consisted of four oral presentations (15 minutes each), providing insights into a range of current projects and recent findings across the paediatric exercise oncology continuum, from acute treatment phases through to survivorship.



Figure 13. Lena Wypyrskyk of the FORTEe team in Mainz, Germany presenting her work entitled **“Respiratory patterns during exercise in children, adolescents and young adults with cancer”**, which was included as one of the four research presentations in the morning session on **“Physical Function from Diagnosis to Survivorship”**.

This was followed by a Rapid Oral session entitled **“Insights from Novel Interventions and Assessments”**, chaired by **Dr Maria Olsson** and **PD Dr Joachim Wiskemann**. The session comprised five presentations (10 minutes each), highlighting innovative intervention approaches, emerging assessment methodologies, and recent developments in the field of paediatric exercise oncology.



Figure 14. Hayley Marriott of the FORTEe team in Oxford, UK presenting her work on the FORTEe technologies, as part of the five Rapid Orals in the morning session on **“Insights from Novel Interventions and Assessments”**.

The **“Meet the Experts” lunch session** provided an interactive platform for direct exchange between early-career researchers, clinicians, and leading experts in the field of paediatric exercise oncology. The session commenced with a brief welcome by the FORTEe Conference President and members of the Scientific Committee (Prof Dr Jörg Faber, PD Dr rer medic Sabine Kesting, Prof Dr Nicole Culos-Reed, and PD Dr rer medic Miriam Götte), followed by an open **symposium discussion** with selected conference speakers. The format encouraged informal dialogue, questions, and knowledge exchange across disciplines, before concluding at 01:00 p.m. with the conference program.

The afternoon programme opened with an invited symposium, featuring three contributions (20 minutes each). **Prof Dr med Irene von Lüttichau**, Head of the Division of Paediatric Haematology, Oncology, and Cell Therapy at the Technical University of Munich, presented on **“Bridging Medicine and Movement: Integrating Exercise Therapy into Paediatric Oncology Care.”** Her presentation was complemented by a brief **interview with a young patient**, who shared her personal experiences and perspectives on physical activity during cancer treatment, thereby providing an additional patient-centred dimension to the discussion. Listening to patient feedback and documenting their input and experience has been a cornerstone for the FORTEe project as the scientific results collected throughout the project’s run-time. **PD Dr rer medic Sabine Kesting** delivered a presentation entitled **“Exercise Guidelines for Children and Adolescents with Cancer”**. Her talk provided evidence-based perspectives on rehabilitation strategies and the development process of structured exercise recommendations within paediatric oncology care. **Dr Precious Madzimbe** contributed a valuable low-resource setting perspective with his talk on **“Physiotherapist Perspective on Paediatric Exercise Oncology and Rehabilitation in a Low-Income Country”**. He highlighted the challenges and opportunities of implementing paediatric rehabilitation and exercise oncology in resource-limited healthcare systems, drawing on his extensive clinical, academic, and research experience in Zimbabwe and across African contexts.

Collectively, the symposium underscored the global relevance of paediatric exercise oncology and emphasised the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration across different healthcare systems and socioeconomic settings.



Figure 15. PD Dr rer medic Sabine Kesting (left) giving her talk on “Exercise Guidelines for Children and Adolescents with Cancer” and Dr Precious Madzimbe (right) presenting the “Physiotherapist perspective on paediatric exercise oncology and rehabilitation in a Low-Income Country” during the invited symposium.

The morning of the second conference day concluded with five rapid oral presentations (10 minutes each) on “**Exercise and Implementation Needs**”, chaired by **Dr Carolina Chamorro-Viña** and **Dr Vesile Yıldız Kabak**. The session showcased current developments and ongoing challenges in translating exercise oncology research into clinical practice, with a particular focus on implementation strategies, feasibility aspects, and real-world application of exercise interventions in paediatric oncology care settings.



Figure 16. Dr Milica Stefanovic, a member of the FORTEe team in Ljubljana, Slovenia, was one of the speakers in the session of six rapid oral presentations. She presented the impact of the FORTEe trial on her institution in Slovenia, highlighting its contribution to the implementation and further development of exercise-based interventions within the local clinical and research setting.

After a brief coffee break, the programme continued with a research session entitled “**Effective Intervention Strategies and Implementation Approaches**”, chaired by **Dr Nivedita S. Prabhu** and **Dr Marie Neu**. The session comprised four oral presentations that addressed current evidence on the development, optimisation, and real-world implementation of exercise-based interventions in paediatric oncology. Contributions highlighted methodological advances as well as practical considerations for integrating structured exercise programmes into clinical care pathways.

This session then led into the final keynote lecture by **Dr Keri Schadler (Houston, USA)**, Associate Professor of Paediatrics Research at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre. In her talk, entitled “**Exercise impacts the tumour microenvironment and response to therapy**”, she highlighted the role of exercise in shaping the tumour microenvironment and its influence on therapy response. Drawing on evidence from preclinical models and translational research approaches, she provided innovative insights into how physical activity may modulate cancer biology and potentially enhance treatment efficacy.

The congress concluded with official closing remarks, which summarised the scientific breadth and interdisciplinary scope of the presentations delivered throughout the meeting. Particular emphasis was placed on the high level of scientific exchange, the diversity of methodological and clinical perspectives, and the strong collaborative spirit that characterised the congress. In addition, the closing highlighted the importance of continued international collaboration and knowledge transfer, and outlined key future directions for further advancing exercise oncology within paediatric cancer care and survivorship.

Within the framework of the closing session, the “Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz – Award for Young Investigators” was presented to recognise outstanding scientific contributions by early-career researchers. Awards were granted in two categories: **Best Poster Presentation** and **Best Oral Presentation**, each endowed with €750. The Best Poster Award was granted to **Lena Wypyrsczyk (Mainz, Germany)**, while the Best Oral Presentation Award was awarded to **Lauren Ha (Sydney, Australia)**, acknowledging their excellent scientific work and contribution to the field of paediatric exercise oncology.



Figure 17. Award ceremony of the Kinderkrebshilfe Mainz – Award for Young Investigators during the PEOC × FORTEe 2026 closing session. The Best Poster Award was presented to Lena Wypyrsczyk (Mainz), and the Best Oral Presentation Award to Lauren Ha (Sydney), each recognising outstanding scientific contributions in paediatric exercise oncology and including a €750 prize.

3. Audience and number of attendees

The congress was attended by **142 participants**, representing **24 countries** and including internationally renowned experts in paediatric oncology, exercise science, rehabilitation, and survivorship research. The meeting brought together a highly interdisciplinary and international audience, fostering exchange between clinical, scientific, and applied perspectives within the field of paediatric exercise oncology.

Local organisational and support structures comprised physicians, exercise professionals, nurses, administrative personnel, and volunteers, all of whom contributed to the smooth and effective implementation of the programme across all venues and activity formats.

The event was further supported by media representatives and a broad range of local and national stakeholders, and supporters, thereby ensuring strong visibility and reinforcing the translational and collaborative character of the congress.

4. Feedback and impact

The PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress successfully brought together leading experts, practitioners, and stakeholders in paediatric exercise oncology, serving as a platform to exchange cutting-edge research, clinical insights, and translational strategies. With its strong focus on scientific excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration, and practical application, the congress translated the achievements of the FORTEe project and broader research initiatives into meaningful discussions, fostering knowledge transfer and networking among participants.

The programme highlighted the latest evidence on exercise interventions for children, adolescents, and young adults affected by cancer, showcasing how structured, safe, and engaging physical activity can be integrated into clinical care and survivorship pathways. Keynote lectures, symposia, oral presentations, and poster sessions collectively underscored the impact of exercise on treatment outcomes, immunological responses, and long-term quality of life, reinforcing the central role of evidence-based exercise in paediatric oncology.

The congress was widely praised by invited speakers, participants, and supporting stakeholders for its organisation, scientific quality, and interactive format (see [Annex 2](#)). The dedicated contributions of the organising team, and volunteers ensured a smooth and engaging experience, enabling rich scientific exchange and professional networking.

Media coverage and outreach efforts reflected the resonance of the congress. **Social media dissemination and live coverage** of the congress across FORTEe's and PEOC attendees' platforms (i.e. LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and Bluesky), highlighted the relevance of paediatric exercise oncology research to a wider audience, strengthened public awareness, and encouraged dialogue within the scientific community and beyond.

Overall, PEOC x FORTEe 2026 reinforced the **importance of collaborative, translational research in paediatric exercise oncology** and marked a significant step forward in integrating exercise as an evidence-based component of standard care for young cancer patients. Among many other publications during the final project year, the **experiences from the FORTEe trial** have been published in *Frontiers in Oncology* ([Neu et al., 2026](#)) as a key output from the FORTEe project and the PEOC x FORTEe Conference, aiming to generate long-term impact and guide experts and treatment centres in the field of paediatric oncology on how to successfully implement exercise interventions.

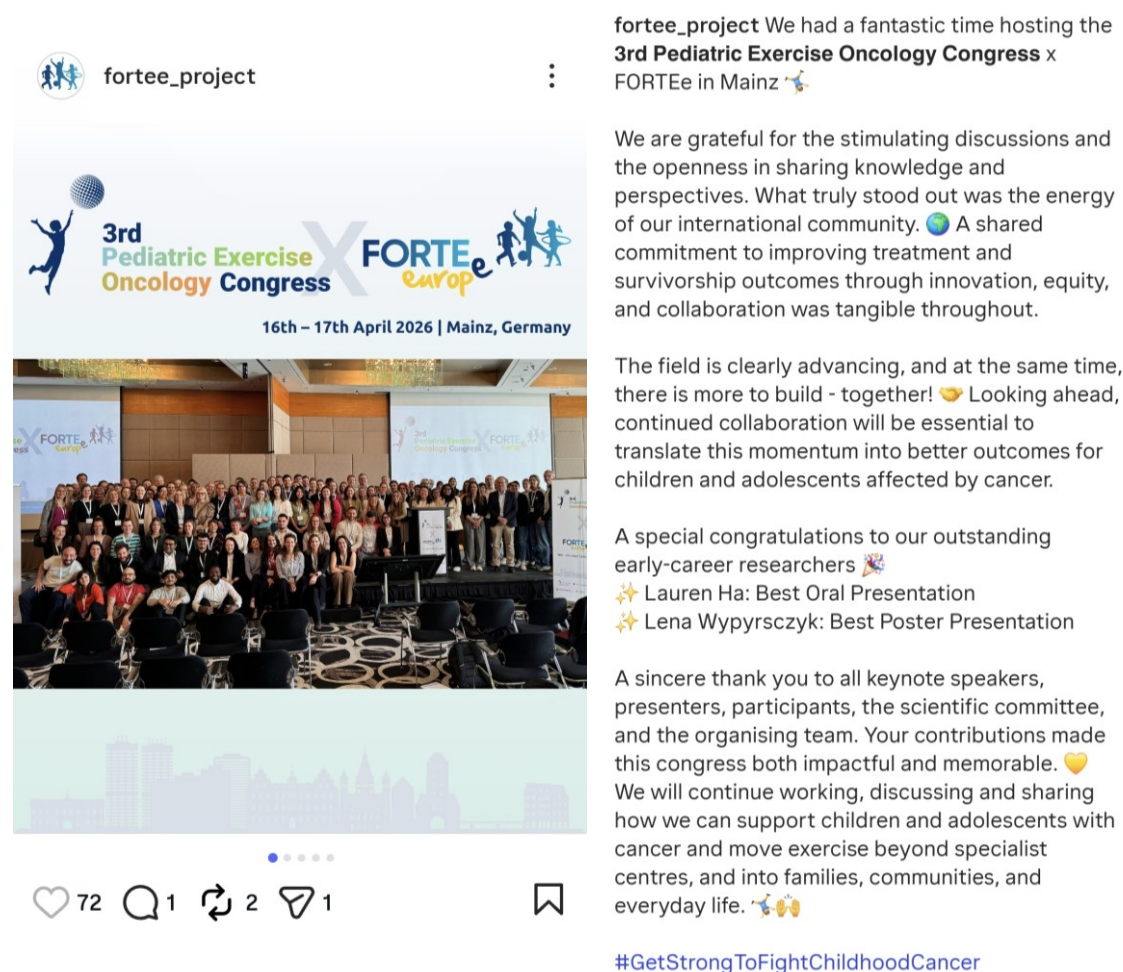


Figure 18. Social media outreach via the FORTEe Instagram channel highlighted key moments and scientific impressions from the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress, extending the visibility of paediatric exercise oncology research beyond the onsite audience.

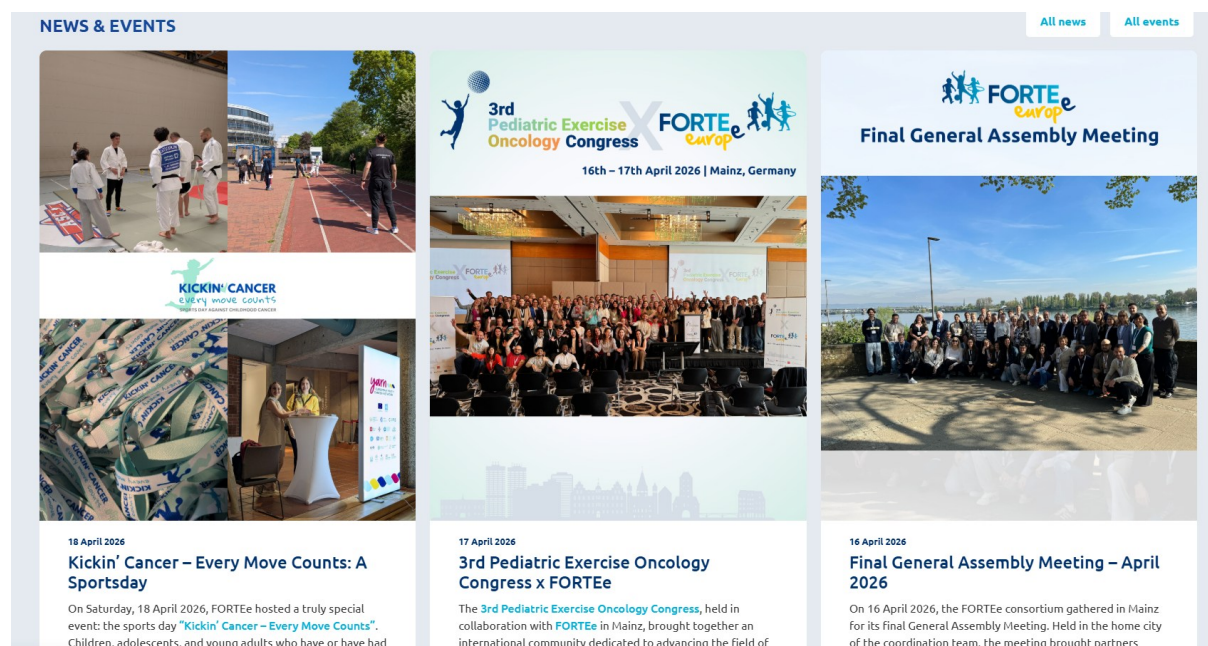


Figure 19. Post-event coverage on the FORTEe website, featuring news articles on the FORTEe General Assembly Meeting, the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress, and the “Kickin’ Cancer” sports day, highlighting key scientific, collaborative, and community-focused outcomes of the event week

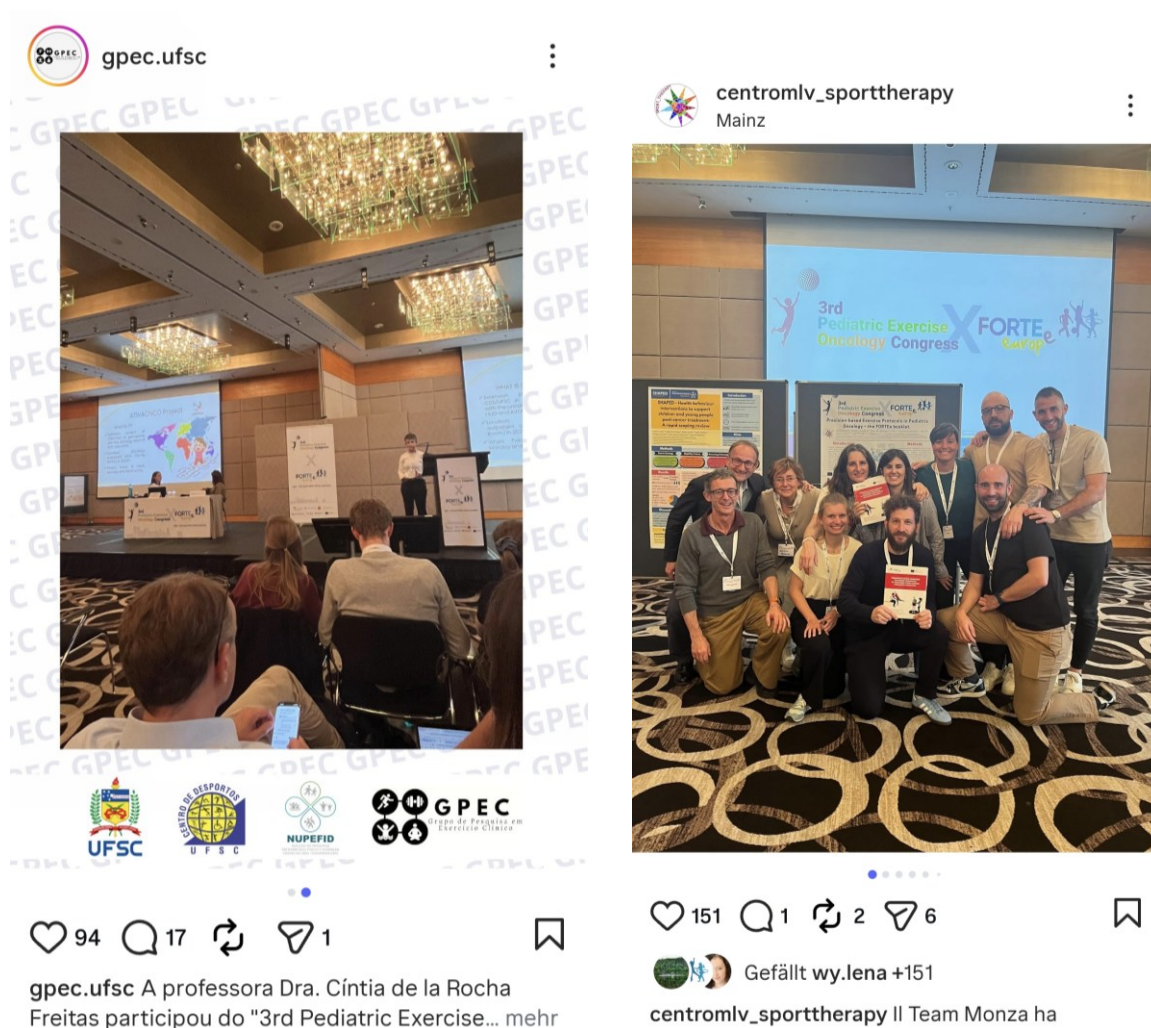


Figure 20. FORTEe partner institution Monza (right) and international congress participants and attendees (Dr. Cintia de la Rocha Freitas; left) highlighted key scientific and community moments of the event.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the FORTEe consortium is highly satisfied with the success and impact of the PEOC x FORTEe 2026 congress. Serving as a central platform for knowledge exchange and consensus discussion, the congress effectively combined high-level scientific dissemination with interdisciplinary collaboration, highlighting the latest advances in paediatric exercise oncology.

The event showcased the relevance of evidence-based exercise interventions during and after cancer treatment, translating research findings into practical insights for clinicians, researchers, and other stakeholders. The participation of internationally renowned experts, interactive sessions, and networking opportunities reinforced the congress's role in fostering scientific dialogue and professional development.

Extensive engagement, including media coverage and social media outreach, further amplified the congress's visibility, strengthening awareness of paediatric exercise oncology across the scientific community and beyond. Overall, PEOC x FORTEe 2026 represents a significant milestone in advancing research, collaboration, and implementation of exercise as an integral component of paediatric cancer care.

6. Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 945153.

This report reflects only the author's view and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

7. References

7th FORTEe Newsletter:

<https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=6f5f20a559a2bf72f06c89915&id=bb5e39eb21>

Conference management company:

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Neu MA, Dreismickenbecker E, Wypyrsczyk L, Spreafico F, Balduzzi A, Hei erer B, Marriott H, Paul NW, Watson E, Bloch W, Fridh MK, G tte M, Kitanovski L, Konda B, Lucia A, Mongondry R, Rizvi K, Larsen HB, Bauer N, Beller R, Fiuza-Luces C, Gau  G, K hn M, Moriggi TP, P rol O, Olivier F, Ravn k D, Rov n M, Santana-Sosa E, Stefanovi  M, Wright P, Zardo W, Lanfranconi F, Wiskemann J and Faber J (2026). [Implementing exercise interventions in pediatric oncology: an expert consensus framework from the FORTEe project.](#) *Front Oncol* 16: 1893935.

PEOC x FORTEe registration page:

https://converia.uni-mainz.de/frontend/index.php?folder_id=1128&page_id=

Annex 1 - PEOC × FORTEe 2026 Congress agenda

Pediatric Exercise Oncology Congress - PEOC 2026

PEOC meets FORTEe - Bringing Together Evidence and Innovation in Pediatric Exercise Oncology

Congress program



Thursday, 16th of April 2026

2:00 - 2:15 pm	Opening words by the Congress Presidents - Miriam Götte, Nicole Culos Reed & Jörg Faber
2:15 - 3:15 pm	FORTEe - Get strong to fight childhood cancer: an exercise intervention for children and adolescents undergoing anti-cancer treatment - Marie Neu, Elias Dreismickenbecker (Mainz/Germany)
3:15 - 4:00 pm	Keynote 1 Chair: Sabine Kesting Revolutionizing Recovery: The Power of Digital and Community-Based Exercise for Childhood Cancer Survivors - David Mizrahi (Sydney/Australia)
4:00 - 5:30 pm	Interactive Poster Reception with Networking Chairs: Helen Griffith, Alejandro Lucia, Jörg Faber
7:00 - 11:00 pm	Congress Dinner and FORTEe Science Evening: Social Networking in the Eulchen Brauerei Mainz Meeting point is at 6:15 p.m. in the Hyatt lobby

Friday, 17th of April 2026 - Part 1

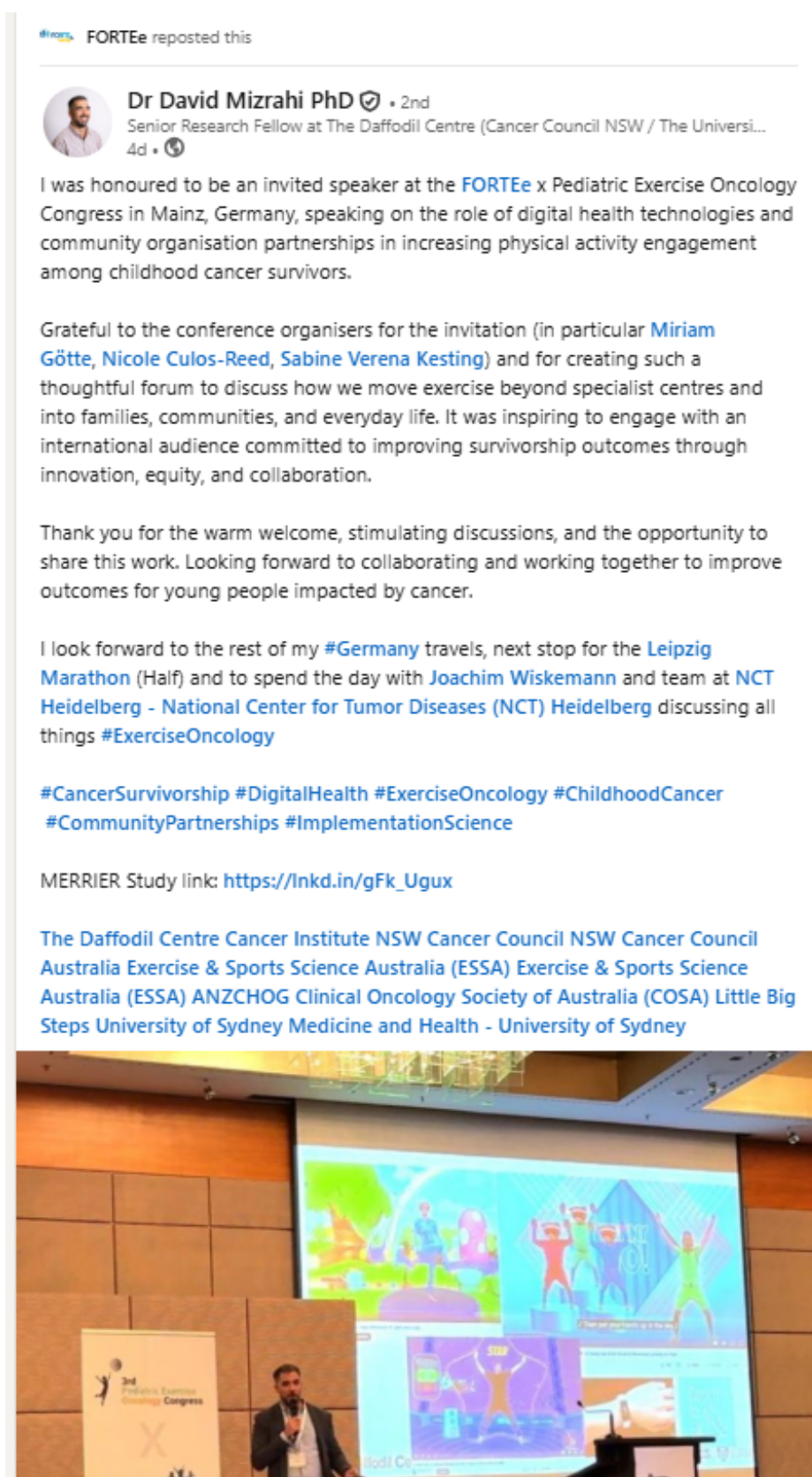
8:30 - 9:15 am	Keynote 2 Chair: Miriam Götte Exercise and anticancer immunity - Carmen Fiuzza-Luces & Alejandro Lucia (Madrid/Spain)	
9:15 - 10:15 am	Session 1 – Physical function from diagnosis to survivorship (Research presentations) Chairs: Elias Dreismickenbecker & Maxime Caru - Respiratory patterns during exercise in children, adolescents and young adults with cancer - Lena Wypysczyk - Exercise Intolerance and Return to Sports in Survivors of Pediatric Hematologic Malignancies - Linda Peli - Differences in Body Composition and Physical Activity among Long-Term Childhood, Adolescent, and Young Adult Cancer Survivors with Prediabetes - Rusha Bhandari - From evidence to implementation – the BEPPO randomised controlled trial as a step towards exercise becoming standard care in pediatric oncology - Theresa Heering	
10:15 - 10:45 am	Coffee Break	
10:45 - 11:45 am	Session 2 – Insights from novel interventions and assessments (Rapid Orals) Chairs: Maria Olsson & Joachim Wiskemann - Compensatory gait in childhood cancer? How motor impairments shape walking patterns: a cross-sectional correlation study - Mareike Kühn - Prehabilitative Exercise in Children and Adolescents with Soft Tissue and Bone Sarcoma of the Lower Extremity – a Feasibility Study - Jennifer Queisser - Telemedicine-Based Adapted Physical Activity in Pediatric Oncology: Feasibility and Effectiveness - Laura Pianta - Assessment of Muscle Strength, Sensory Functions, Motor Performance, Fatigue, and Quality of Life Level in Children with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia: A Prospective Follow-up Study - Vesile Yıldız Kabak - The use of motion tracking technology to support an exercise intervention for children and young people with cancer: perspectives of users and healthcare professionals in the FORTEe trial - Hayley Marriott	
11:45 - 12:45 pm	Lunch Break and Meet the Experts	

12:45 - 1:45 pm	Invited Symposium Chair: Nicole Culos Reed & Miriam Götte • Exercise Guidelines for Children and Adolescents with Cancer - Sabine Kesting & Martin Kaj Fridh (Germany/Denmark) • Bridging Medicine and Movement: Integrating Exercise Therapy into Pediatric Oncological Care (incl. survivors' voices and perspectives) - Irene Teichert-von Luettichau & Katrin Burkhardt (Munich/Germany) • Physiotherapist perspective on pediatric exercise oncology and rehabilitation in a Low-Income Country - Precious Madzimbe (Zimbabwe/Africa)
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Session 3 - Exercise and implementation needs (Rapid Orals) Chairs: Carolina Chamorro-Viña & Vesile Yıldız Kabak • Physical activity and sedentary behavior among children in Sweden who survived a brain tumor - Åsa Persson Dobruna • The impact of the first month after diagnosis on physical activity, sleep, fatigue and quality of life in children with cancer - William Zardo • From Zero to Integration: Implementing Exercise Therapy in Pediatric Oncology through the FORTEe Trial at Ljubljana Children's Hospital, Slovenia - Milica Stefanović • Physical Activity in an Oncology Outpatient Clinic: Experience and Perceptions from ATIVAONCO Project - Cíntia de la Rocha Freitas • Exploring Links Between Parent and Child Physical Activity and Quality of Life in Pediatric Brain Tumor Patients and Survivors - Ariane Levesque
2:45 - 3:15 pm	Coffee break
3:15 - 4:15 pm	Session 4 - Effective intervention strategies and implementation approaches (Research presentations) Chairs: Nivedita S. Prabhu & Marie Neu • Digital physical activity support for childhood cancer survivors: intervention trial results and factors affecting real-world implementation - Lauren Ha • Interim Adoption and Implementation Results from a Videoconference-Delivered Physical Activity Intervention for Pediatric Cancer and Blood Disorder Patients in Alberta, Canada - Emma McLaughlin • Exercise Intervention for Patients with Adolescent Cancer: preliminary results of a Randomised Controlled Trial - Rodrigo Yagüe-Peñuelas • Exercise during Pediatric Allo-HSCT: Follow-Up Results on Physical Function, Fatigue, and QoL from the Exploratory ANIMAL Trial - Ronja Beller
4:15 - 5:00 pm	Keynote 3 Chair: Nicole Culos Reed Exercise impacts the tumor microenvironment and response to therapy - Keri Schadler (Houston/USA)
5:00 - 5:15 pm	Presentation of the Kinderkrebshilfe e.V. - Young Investigator Award Closing remarks of scientific program - Miriam Götte, Nicole Culos Reed & Jörg Faber



Annex 2 - Social media coverage and posts by PEOC attendees via LinkedIn

David Mizrahi – Keynote Speaker



Hayley Marriott – FORTEe member & PEOC speaker

FORTEe reposted this



Hayley Marriott • 1st
 Researcher & Associate Lecturer
 1d •

Just back from a really special few days in Mainz for our final in person **FORTEe** project meeting, alongside the PEOC x FORTEe conference and the Kicking Cancer Sports Day.

It felt quite emotional knowing this was our last in person FORTEe meeting as a group. It was so lovely to see colleagues from across the consortium and take a moment to reflect on everything we've achieved together. What started as an idea has grown into something really meaningful, thanks to the passion and teamwork of so many people.

The conference itself was incredibly inspiring. Hearing about the amazing work happening across the world in this field was a real reminder of how much progress is being made, and how much there still is to build on. It was also really nice to meet new people in person and make those connections beyond the screen.

One of the biggest highlights was the Kicking Cancer Sports Day. It was such a powerful and uplifting reminder of why this work matters. Seeing children and families enjoying movement and sport, and the joy it brings, really shows the real impact of this work.

A huge thank you to all the organisers who made these events possible.

I'm feeling very grateful to have been part of this project - it has been a real team effort. I've learnt so much from colleagues across the world and will carry so much of this into my future work.



Lauren Ha – PEOC speaker and “Best Oral Presentation”-Winner

 **FORTEe** reposted this



Lauren Ha • 2nd
 Postdoctoral Research Fellow and Exercise Physiologist
 2d • 

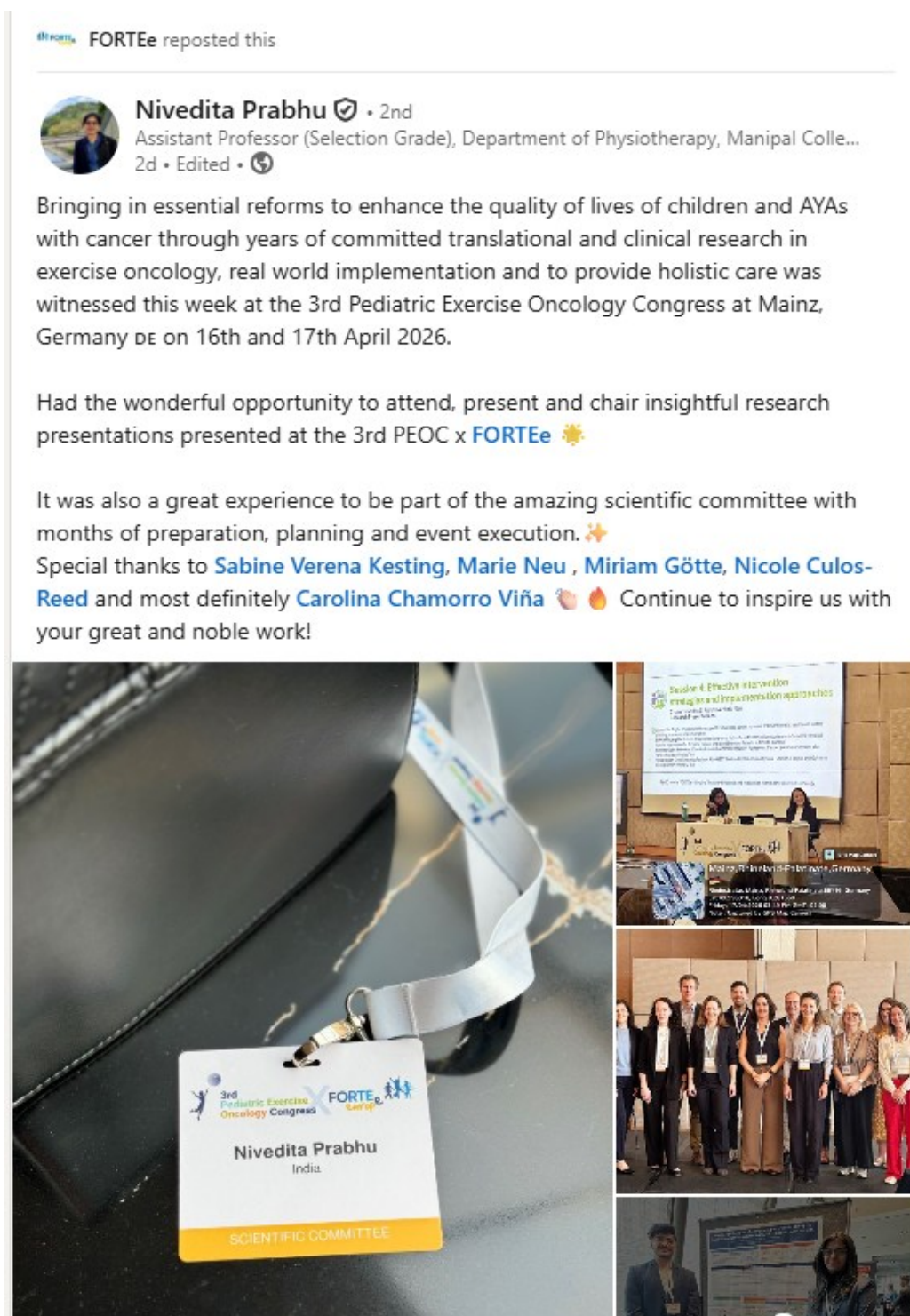
I've been a little MIA lately, so here's a rapid fire 2026 update:

- ✨ Swapped Vegemite for maple syrup!! I've recently moved to Vancouver for a postdoctoral research position at the [University of the Fraser Valley](#), working with Dr. [Amanda Wurz](#)
- ✨ Had the chance to present at the first in-person Pediatric Exercise Oncology Conference (PEOC x **FORTEe**) in Mainz, Germany, sharing final results from my Australian 'Making Moves' trial (funded by [The Kids' Cancer Project](#)), along with a new project I'm leading in Canada focused on co-adapting and implementing the IMPACT intervention for children and adolescents with cancer and blood disorders across British Columbia, Ontario, and the Maritimes CA
- ✨ Feeling incredibly grateful to have received the Kinderkrebschlife Mainz Young Investigator Award for Best Oral Presentation!

A big start to the year... excited for what's ahead 💖




Nivedita Prabhu – PEOC Scientific Committee Member



Precious Madzimbe – PEOC speaker

