

## World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2025

### The Brain Economy

Thursday 23 January 9:30 – 10:45 CET (75 min)

Davos-Klosters, Kurpark Village, Andermatt

#### SESSION DESCRIPTION

Brain disorders such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, strokes, and dementia are estimated to cost the global economy \$5 trillion per year, a figure projected to surge to \$16 trillion by 2030. Addressing these challenges presents an unprecedented opportunity to reclaim 130 million years of high-quality life and unlock immense economic potential. As public interest in brain health continues to grow, what public and private actions and investments are needed to capture this opportunity to strengthen cognitive and emotional health?

On the agenda:

- How health systems can improve access to brain health services, train healthcare professionals, and secure sustainable financing.
- Link between cardiometabolic health, nutrition, and brain development, particularly during early childhood.
- Enhance the competitiveness by developing essential cognitive and emotional skills in the workforce.

This session is directly linked to the Mental Health Initiative at the Centre for Health and Healthcare of the World Economic Forum.

#### CONTEXT

Brain health underpins individual potential, workforce productivity, and societal resilience. It addresses neurological disorders and essential mental capacities, offering a pathway to improved quality of life, innovation, and economic sustainability as global challenges evolve.

This workshop launches the 2025 "Brain Health, Brain Capital, and the Future of Mental Well-being" Dialogue Series by the World Economic Forum and McKinsey Health Institute. The series will unite leaders to drive investments, workforce resilience, and integration of brain health into global strategies. This session sets the tone for action, unlocking brain capital to foster innovation, equity, and sustainable growth worldwide.

#### SESSION OBJECTIVES

- **Define Strategic Actions:** Identify key investments and initiatives to strengthen brain health and reduce the economic impact of brain disorders.
- **Drive Collaboration:** Facilitate cross-sector partnerships to advance innovation in brain health.
- **Launch the 2025 Dialogue Series:** Introduce the initiative, highlighting its vision to enhance global health, economic resilience, and workforce productivity.

#### SESSION OUTCOMES

- **Enhanced Awareness:** Participants will understand the economic and societal impacts of brain disorders and pathways to address them.
- **Actionable Frameworks:** Clear strategies for advancing brain health through policies, programs, and investments.
- **Sustained Engagement:** Insights will shape the dialogue series, fostering collaboration and aligning stakeholders on key priorities.

## SESSION SPEAKERS

### Opening Remarks:

- [The Hon. Pakishe Aaron Motsoaledi](#), Minister of Health, Ministry of South Africa (Confirmed)
- [Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](#), Director General, WHO (Confirmed)

### Facilitated By:

- [Tracy Francis](#), Senior Partner, Managing Partner, Latin America, McKinsey (Confirmed)

### With:

- [Nancy Brown](#), Chief Executive Officer, American Heart Association, USA (Confirmed)
- [Geoff Martha](#), Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Medtronic, USA; International Business Council (Confirmed)
- [Beth Thompson](#), Chief Strategy Officer, Wellcome Trust (Confirmed)

### Discussion Leaders:

- [Victoria Lee](#), CEO and President, Fraser Health, Canada (Confirmed): Employers and their role in the brain economy.
- [David Ko](#), CEO, Calm,inc co (Confirmed) - Advancing brain health through science & innovations
- [Beth Thompson](#), Chief Strategy Officer, Wellcome Trust (Confirmed): Unlocking brain capital with philanthropic-public-private investments.
- [Prof. Chong Yap-Seng](#), Dean, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS Medicine), National University of Singapore, Singapore (Confirmed): Systems Strengthening for Brain Health
- [Nancy Brown](#), Chief Executive Officer, American Heart Association, USA

### Firestarter's:

- [Sir Mohammad Jaafar](#), Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, The Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company KCSC (Confirmed)
- [Jonathan Haidt](#), Professor of Ethical Leadership, Stern School of Business New York University (Confirmed)