GLOBAL PAEDIATRIC HEALTH

a section of The Swedish Paediatric Society

6 February 2026

Global perinatal seminar:

Tackling Birth Asphyxia from Pregnancy to Early Life In low- and middle-income countries

Place: Lecture Hall Torsten Gordh, S-Huset/S2:02, Karolinska University Hospital Solna, Eugeniavägen 27 or **online** on **Zoom**

Time: 8.15-16.45

Speakers

Sudhin Thayyil, Uwe Ewald, Ashish KC, Nick Brown, Johanna Blomgren, Anna Sand, Thomas Brune and Maria Örtqvist

We invite researchers, clinicians, and others with an interest in perinatal care in low- and middle income settings to join us for an engaging seminar addressing one of the greatest contributors to child mortality and morbidity: birth asphyxia. The event will emphasize the urgent need for coordinated multidisciplinary interventions—from pregnancy through birth, neonatal care, early follow-up, and rehabilitation—led by midwives, obstetricians, paediatricians, nurses, physiotherapists, and other key professionals.

Click HERE to register before 30th January!

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact: styrelsen.global@barnlakarforeningen.se

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Program

08:15–08:30 – *Introduction to Birth Asphyxia* — **Uwe Ewald**
08:30–09:30 – *Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy in LMICs: Predictable, Preventable, Treatable — and Yet Invisible* — **Sudhin Thayyil**

Coffee break (30 min)

10:00–10:35 – *Strengthening Midwifery Interventions to Improve Newborn Health: Insights from Uganda and Ethiopia* — **Johanna Blomgren**
10:40–11:15 – *Obstetric Interventions to Reduce the Burden of Birth Asphyxia: The Safe Vacuum Initiative in Tanzania* — **Anna Sand**
11:20–12:00 – *Integrating Antenatal and Postnatal Interventions: The Safer Birth Bundle* — **Ashish KC**

Lunch break (60 min)

13:00–13:20 – *A Perinatal Workshop Model to Enhance Collaboration Between Obstetric and Neonatal Teams* — **Thomas Brune**
13:25–13:55 – *Follow-Up After Birth Asphyxia: Early Detection and Intervention for Infants at High Risk of Cerebral Palsy* —**Maria Örtqvist**
14:00–16:15 – *Interactive Session: Designing and Conducting Perinatal RCTs in LMICs* (includes coffee break) — **Nick Brown**

16:15–16:45 – *Wrap-Up and Discussion* — **Uwe Ewald**

Speakers

Uwe Ewald, former Head of Neonatology at Uppsala University Hospital, Sweden, led the department for 25 years with a focus on family-centred care and zero separation. His research includes quality-improvement initiatives in Vietnam, Nepal and Poland. He will open the seminar with an introduction to the day's theme: birth asphyxia.

Sudhin Thayyil, Professor of Perinatal Neuroscience and Director of the Centre for Perinatal Neuroscience at Imperial College London, focuses on hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy across high- and low-income settings. His lecture will summarise key findings from the HELIX trial, emerging results from the PREVENT study in India, machine-learning approaches to predicting HIE before labour, and novel neuroprotection strategies, including updates from the EMBRACE erythropoietin trial.

Johanna Blomgren, midwife, PhD and postdoctoral researcher at Karolinska Institutet, will discuss midwife-led interventions that promote respectful intrapartum care and optimal birth positioning to improve newborn outcomes in Uganda and Ethiopia. She will present effects on Apgar scores, neonatal transfers, early breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact, and reflect on how these approaches can be adapted and scaled across health systems.

Anna Sand, senior consultant and PhD in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Head of Antenatal Care at Karolinska University Hospital, will present the Safe Vacuum Initiative in Tanzania, which supports the

reintroduction of vacuum extraction to reduce caesarean sections and improve maternal and neonatal outcomes.

Ashish KC, paediatrician and senior lecturer in global neonatal health, has led multiple trials and quality-improvement projects across the maternal–newborn continuum in Nepal and contributed to multi-country epidemiological studies. He will discuss key challenges in conducting multifaceted quality-improvement studies in low- and middle-income settings.

Thomas Brune, paediatrician and neonatologist and former Hospital Director of the Paediatric Hospital of Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, will present outcomes from a five-day workshop designed to strengthen collaboration between obstetric and neonatal teams across three major provincial hospitals in Laos.

Maria Örtqvist, physiotherapist and Associate Professor, will explore the early detection of motor disabilities and physiotherapeutic interventions increasingly used in high-resource settings, and how these practices can be adapted and evaluated in low- and middle-income contexts.

Nick Brown, paediatrician, epidemiologist and Editor-in-Chief of *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, works clinically, academically and editorially across three continents. His interactive session will support participants in strengthening trial design for studies in peripartum care.