Amanda Fuentes, from York University, Psychology (clinical), Canada, will present "Social Information Processing and Working Memory Following Pediatric Stroke.”

Abstract: Previous studies suggest that working memory (WM) and social information processing (SIP), two related individual characteristics that are critical for social competence, are compromised following pediatric stroke. However, research is limited and little is known about the effects of age at stroke and lesion location. WM and SIP patterns were assessed in 32 children, aged 6 to 14, with histories of stroke and 32 controls. Effects of age at stroke (i.e., perinatal, 1 month-5 years, 6-14 years) and lesion location (i.e., cortical, subcortical, and combined) on WM and social outcomes as rated by parents were explored using a large, retrospective sample of children with stroke. Evidence was found for isolated, subtle difficulties in social cue encoding and decoding in children with stroke compared to controls. Children with stroke also consistently performed significantly lower than controls across WM indices and performance was associated with many SIP measures. Children who suffered a stroke between 1 month and 5 years were rated more favourably by parents on social skills than children who suffered a stroke between 6 and 14 years. No evidence was found for an effect of lesion location on WM and social outcomes, nor was there an effect of age at stroke on WM. These findings suggest that social competence in children with stroke may be compromised by subtle, interrelated difficulties in WM and SIP.