



FLORENCIA MORENO

ARGENTINA

Dr Florencia Moreno, a paediatric oncologist from Argentina, is dedicated to advancing childhood cancer care. She earned her medical degree from the University of Buenos Aires in 1989, specialising in Paediatrics (1994), Haematology (1996), and Oncology (2001). To enhance her expertise in health policy, she completed a Master's in Clinical Effectiveness and Health Policies in 2009.

Since 1999, she has been the Founder and Director of the Argentine Paediatric Oncology Registry (ROHA), now covering over 93% of childhood cancer cases nationwide. Her work extends across Latin America, strengthening paediatric oncology registries and improving cancer care outcomes.

Since 2016, she has coordinated PROCUINCA, Argentina's National Paediatric Cancer Programme, leading initiatives such as hospital stratification, quality certification, and implementing the Paediatric Oncology Law. In 2022, ROHA became a public health management tool, directly supporting families of children with cancer.

She currently serves on the Ethics Committee

***"Work consciously to have
the serenity to accept
what I cannot change,
the courage to
change what I can,
and the wisdom to
know the difference."***

Reinhold Niebuhr's prayer

of SLAOP, the SIOOP Standardisation Project, and the Editorial Board of the International Incidence of Childhood Cancer (IARC-WHO), contributing to global efforts to improve childhood cancer care.

On Relationships that Influenced My Career

During my first year of paediatric residency at Hospital Posadas, I met Anabela, a young girl diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. Working alongside the haematology-oncology team, led by Dr Eduardo Dibar and my friend Cecilia Richeri, I supported Anabela and her family through her challenging but ultimately successful treatment. That experience cemented my commitment to paediatric haematology-oncology. With Dr Dibar's guidance, I specialised in the field and continued training at Hospital Garrahan in Buenos Aires.

During my training, I developed a strong interest in neuro-oncology, which took me to Memorial Sloan Kettering in New York, where I worked with Dr Jonathan Finlay, gaining advanced expertise in childhood brain tumours. I later deepened my experience under Dr Daniel Alderete at Hospital Garrahan, focusing on complex neuro-oncological cases.

Later, I had the privilege of working with Dr Enrique Schvartman, who instilled in me the lifelong mission of early childhood cancer diagnosis. His mentorship, along with my collaboration with Dr Dora Loria in developing ROHA, marked my entry into epidemiology. Initially a project with Fundación Kaleidos, ROHA was later adopted by the National Cancer Institute. Through visits to paediatric oncology units across Argentina, I connected with oncologists nationwide, reinforcing the importance of early diagnosis and strengthening the national cancer registry.

On Challenges and Overcoming Them

In 1999, I transitioned from clinical neuro-oncology to addressing Argentina's lack of comprehensive paediatric oncology data. At the time, I was at Hospital Garrahan, the country's largest paediatric hospital. While oncologists focus on patient care, improving the broader healthcare system is equally vital. Recognising the need for reliable national data to design effective interventions, I set out to establish a national paediatric cancer registry. Creating a registry in a vast country with diverse healthcare realities was challenging. Understanding collaboration was key, I partnered with Dr Enrique Schvartman, a dedicated paediatric oncologist. With Fundación Kaleidos' support, we established ROHA, securing office space, developing a registration system, and recruiting staff. Through nationwide

training, we expanded ROHA's reach, now covering over 90% of paediatric cancer cases in Argentina.

My second major challenge came as coordinator of the national paediatric oncology programme, working to position paediatric oncology as a public health priority. A key milestone was developing the regulations for the Paediatric Oncology Law, ensuring vital support for children with cancer and their families. This required close collaboration with legal experts, government ministries, and parent advocacy groups.

These experiences reinforced the importance of collaboration, adaptability, and strategic vision in improving paediatric oncology care. Strong data, effective policies, and practical solutions drive lasting change for children with cancer.

On Balancing Career and Other Life Responsibilities

During my early training, Ricky, the father of my children—Olivia, Gaspar, and Renata—was a constant support, helping me navigate the demands of my specialty. My family, friends, and passion for sports brought me joy and strength.

Life was a balancing act—hospital work, nationwide travel (often with little Renata by my side), raising my children, and managing school runs. Though challenging, these experiences shaped me, teaching resilience and the beauty of embracing each moment.

Later, Chulo became my life partner, sharing my love for surfing—a lifelong passion that continues to inspire me. Looking back, I hope my children saw in me the strength and determination that come from pursuing one's passions with heart and dedication.

Yoga, meditation, surf training, and the love of my children, family, and friends keep me grounded. Through every stage of life, I have embraced challenges with gratitude, giving my best to what I love.

My Words of Wisdom for the Next Generation of Female Leaders

A Portuguese phrase resonates with me: "Acredita que Acontece" ("Believe and it will happen"). It highlights the power of faith in one's dreams. But belief alone is not enough—it must be followed by "1, 2, 3," symbolising a moment to pause, breathe, and act. This simple countdown helps overcome hesitation, reminding us to move forward without overthinking.

This combination—envisioning a goal ("Acredita que Acontece") and pursuing it with perseverance, commitment, and love ("1, 2, 3")—has guided my journey and continues to

shape my life.

To those starting in paediatric oncology: this field is demanding yet deeply rewarding. Doubts and exhaustion will arise, but if your heart is in it, persist with dedication and love. Cultivate tolerance for frustration, humility, and gratitude—they are essential for growth and will keep you grounded, appreciating every step of the journey.