



BENCH-CAN PROJECT

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ECPC Participation to the Bench-Can project

Within its effort to reduce inequalities in cancer care, European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) found in the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECEI) a precious ally.

In 2013 a cooperation initiative was established, aiming at identifying possible solutions to the unacceptable inequalities in cancer care among Member States and at cooperating in EU research projects.

As part of Bench-Can Project, the ECPC accepted to take an active role participating to the Pilot Sites' visits and the cooperation between the two Organisations become dynamic and effective.

The Bench-Can partners discussed and drafted the tools, including processes and outcomes indicators, to be employed in the Pilot Sites. The draft version has been then validated enabling the benchmarking group to effectively compare the Pilot Sites, in order to peer review the benchmarking exercise and to identify areas for improvement in quality of care and patients' outcomes.

The Comprehensive Cancer Centres participating to the piloting phase involve patients and carers in the benchmarking process, providing information and assessing performances on the basis of their experience. In this framework, ECPC Audit Committee Member, Dr. Pietro Presti, collaborates to guarantee that the voice of patients is heard and to ensure that they have timely and affordable access to the best treatments and care.

Before the on-site visits took place, Dr. Presti attended a preparatory meeting in Amsterdam on October 6th 2014. The meeting aimed at preparing the benchmarking group to the visits to the Pilot Sites, harmonising common objectives and methodology



This newsletter has been realised in collaboration with:



and defining the evaluation of results. OECl auditors also participated to the site visits, providing their experience based on the OECl Accreditation and Designation audit process and suggesting recommendation for the on-site visits.

“This experience is a true turning point, for me as a healthcare professional, but mostly for cancer patients’ representativeness” said Dr. Presti, providing his account on Bench-Can. “It is invaluable to compare our work with the best practices of some of Europe’s best oncology institutes. Through Bench-Can, we can harmonise oncology healthcare practices, but also harmonise patients’ advocacy capacity”.

Dr. Presti’s evaluation on the on-site visits performed so far is very positive: “The visits performed so far allowed me to get in contact with several cancer patients organisations and to understand their strengths and needs. I will bring this precious information back to ECPC, where we will work to achieve a truly pan-European patient-centric cancer care model, based also on the results of Bench-Can”.

The goal of the Bench-Can Project is not to rank cancer centres, but to benchmark best practices and identify examples of excellence that will contribute to reduce inequalities in cancer care in EU.

Thanks to the ECPC collaboration, the Bench-Can Project has the needed expert support to guide the centeredness of the patients across all pilot sites.



Dr. Pietro Presti

The Bench-Can 3rd Project Partners Meeting

The Bench-Can Project partners met in Brussel, at the Fondation Universitaire, on May 14th 2014. The meeting has been attended by Mr. Adrian Kraal from Berenschot, the Company in charge to the External Evaluation Report

Some crucial aspects of the project have been discussed and the most appropriate solutions have been agreed. The list of the Pilot Sites has been defined and the dates of the first three visits to Pilot Sites have been fixed; moreover, the definition of the key project documents, in order to assist the preparation of the visits to the Pilot Sites, has been agreed and other emerging arguments of discussion have been brought to the next Bench-Can meeting.

More information at: http://www.oeci.eu/Benchcan/Read_News.aspx?news=3



Pilot Workshop Day

In order to discuss several topics related to the preparation of a site visit to a Pilot Site, on October 13th 2014, a group of experts of the Bench-Can Project met in Amsterdam, hosted by the Netherland Cancer Institute. The main goal of the workshop was to get a common understanding of what the site visits entailed and to get some tips and ideas from experienced on benchmarking and related topics.

The participants had clearly in mind that Bench-Can Project main aims are implementing best practices within cancer institutes and contributing to cancer care through the EU and, within this framework, the debate focused on the definition of the information to be gathered and how to involve in the benchmarking process the management and the caregivers of the Pilot Sites, as well as the patients.

The challenge is particularly stimulating and, therefore, a selected number of speakers, with previous experiences in benchmarking and in the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) Accreditation and Designation Process, provided their knowledge and points of view to the group selected to visit the Pilot Sites. In particular, Mrs. Abi Rajan from NKI, being involved in several site visits for the NKI, gave an interesting speech on the need to motivate and involve participants from the Pilot Sites and the best strategies to obtain it; Mrs. Femke Boomsma, from IKNL, gave a speech on her experiences from the OECI Accreditation and Designation Audit process; Mrs. Wineke van Lent from NKI gave a presentation on her experience in benchmarking cancer centres.

1st Bench-Can Interim Meeting

The Italian Cancer network “Alleanza Contro il Cancro”, collaborates with the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) for the organization of the Bench-Can Interim Meeting scheduled as part of the OECI 2015 Oncology Days which will be held in Porto (Portugal) on June 22nd – 24th 2015.

During an half-day session, the project and the results arising from the in progress experiences within the Pilot Sites will be presented. All the Pilot Sites will be already participating to the Oncology Days as OECI Members.

The foreseen attendance is of about 60 participants representing some of the most known European Comprehensive and Clinical Cancer Centres.

More information on the Oncology Days at: http://www.oeci.eu/ReadNews.aspx?Id_News=67

OECI
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Pre-piloting exercise of the Bench-Can Project

Three Pilot Sites – IPO-PORTO (Portugal), NCI (Lithuania) and NIO (Hungary) – participated in the pre-piloting exercise of the Bench-Can Project. After the completion of the extensive Bench-Can questionnaire (benchmarking tool containing both qualitative and quantitative indicators) in September 2014, a one day project meeting took place between October 27th - November 10th at each of the three Pilot Sites.

The goal of the meetings was to clarify and verify the answers submitted with the questionnaire, identify the best practices at each cancer centre, and to obtain further feedback on the adapted indicators.

Each meeting started with a plenary meeting of the Bench-Can team, followed by individual interviews with the officers of the Pilot Sites involved in the compilation of the questionnaire, including experts in finance, human resources, information technology, quality control, research, as well as a patient representative and a clinical representative. A site visit of the breast surgery unit and an interview with the head of surgery took also place.

As coordinator of the Bench-Can Project, the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) expressed its appreciation to the leadership of the participating cancer centres, and to all their colleagues, for their efforts in completing the comprehensive benchmarking tools as well as organising the meetings.

The OECI looks forward to continuing working to improving the quality of interdisciplinary patient treatment with a European vision.



Meeting at National Institute of Oncology, Budapest, Hungary on November 10th, 2014.

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Photo by: Gábor Kató/Miklós Kónya.



Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

Helsinki University Central Hospital (HUCH), Comprehensive Cancer Centre (CCC) Helsinki, Finland

HUCH CCC is responsible for the oncological treatment of cancer throughout the area of the Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa (HUS), with a population of approximately 1,6 million. It is Finland's largest cancer treatment centre and one of the largest in the Nordic Countries. It has overall responsibility for the treatment of cancer patients, integrating the oncological treatment of all cancer types including breast surgery as of January 1st 2015. Each year, the HUCH treats over 16,500 patients, of whom approximately 7,500 are new patients. The Centre employs 480 health care professionals, more than 95 of whom are physicians.

HUCH CCC combines expertise in several specialties and its clinicians are actively involved in clinical and translational research. The patient is at the core of the Centre's operations, and ensuring the high quality and patient safety is the centre's foremost task. The HUCH is willing to improve its capacity for developing therapies for the benefit of patients and the objective is to maintain its position among the leading cancer centres in Europe. This requires constant cooperation with international networks, such as OECl.

The Institute supports clinical and translational cancer research on a wide scale from early Phase I studies to large Phase III and IV trials, and range from surgical oncology, radiation therapy, medical oncology and haematology to palliative care and research on psychosocial aspects of cancer. The scientists working at the centre also coordinate national and international clinical trials. All open studies can be viewed on the Centre's web site. Hospitals throughout the world participate in certain investigator-initiated studies led from the HUCH CCC. The Cancer Centre's haematologists conduct modern translational research by functioning as a global reference laboratory for international studies.

For more information: <http://www.hus.fi/en/Pages/default.aspx>



German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) Heidelberg, Germany



50 Years – Research for
A Life Without Cancer

The Institute was founded in 1964 to serve the mission to fight cancer through research. The DKFZ evolved to Germany's largest biomedical research centre with more than 3,000 staff and to one of the leading biomedical research institutions worldwide. In the Institute, excellent scientists research to unravel the basic mechanisms leading to cancer, to identify risk factors and to develop new prevention strategies. The translation of the results into the clinic is conducted in the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) in Heidelberg in cooperation with the Heidelberg University Hospital. This is where research findings are put to the test in practice, paving the way for individualized cancer medicine.

The research at the DKFZ is conducted in 47 scientific divisions, 28 junior research groups and 13 clinical cooperation units that can be assigned to seven Research Programs. The aim is to investigate and fight cancer in all possible ways. In the Cell and Tumour Biology program the fundamental mechanisms leading to tumour initiation, promotion and progression including metastasis are analyzed on a molecular, cellular and functional level. Researchers of the Functional and Structural Genomics program map the genome, localize genes within the genetic material and investigate the functions of cancer relevant genomic areas. The research program Cancer Risk Factors and Prevention integrates data from the laboratory research, epidemiology and clinical studies and collects biological samples for the establishment of biobanks and databases. The role of the immune system in cancer development and treatment is investigated in the Tumour Immunology program. In the Imaging and Radio-oncology program new imaging and radiotherapy technology is developed and implemented into the clinic. The Infection and Cancer program investigates oncogenic viruses which led to the vaccine against the human papillomaviruses that cause cervical cancer. All recent findings are transported from bench to bedside by the Translational Cancer Research program.

For more information: <http://www.dkfz.de/en/index.html>

Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

National Institute of Oncology (NIO), Budapest - Hungary



The centre was founded in 1936 as the Eötvös Loránd Radium and X-ray Institute. It was expanded, moved to its current location and designated the National Institute of Oncology in 1952. This introduced a new era in NIO's history, switching focus from radiological treatment to comprehensive oncology care.

Today, NIO is the hub of Hungarian oncology and it offers its services to the entire Hungarian population and coordinating national cancer prevention and early detection programs. NIO maintains the National Cancer Registry and organizes the Hungarian National Cancer Control Program, which, in the past decade produced numerous guidelines and governmental health policies.

The Institute has an extended international network with partners in 5 continents. NIO is member of most major EU and international organizations and constantly participates in several European initiatives such as the Bench-Can project.

The NIO has been the epidemiological, organizational, methodological, treatment, research and training centre of Hungarian oncology for more than half a century and coordinates the Hungarian Oncology Network. It is the only OEIC accredited Comprehensive Cancer Centre in Central and Eastern Europe. Annually, NIO treats approximately 16,000 new inpatients and the number of our outpatient events is close to 500,000. The Institute's greatest asset is the professional excellence and human strength of its staff.

NIO's multidisciplinary research platform covers the areas of clinical, translational, and basic research. The Institute has 7 research departments and several clinical and diagnostic departments are also heavily engaged in research activities. These are supported by the Institute as well as by external funding from International, EU and Hungarian grants.

For more information: <http://www.oncol.hu/site/en>



Centro di Riferimento Oncologico, National Cancer Institute - Aviano, Italy



CRO-NCI was established in 1984 and then accredited by the Italian Ministry of Health in 1990. The Institute's mission is the improvement of public health by advancing medical knowledge, providing outstanding specialty medical care and preparing tomorrow's physicians, scientists and other health professionals in the field of oncology. It is a public, non-profit institute operating under the authority of the Italian Health Ministry for the clinical & experimental research functions and shared in the governance by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region as for patient care. Since its foundation, CRO is committed in improving public health by advancing medical knowledge, providing outstanding specialty medical care to persons, in the field of higher education of young researchers, new graduates and post-doc researchers in the field of oncology.

Research at CRO contributes to the advancement of scientific knowledge, the prevention and treatment of disease and the strengthening of the regional and national economy from collaborations with private industry. The current research activity is based on five research lines which are homogeneous and coherent with the Institute's objectives, all focused on biomedical research in oncology. New indicators for the evaluation of Departmental research activity in line with policy directives of the Health Ministry have been adopted. Clinical research is based on mono- and multidisciplinary therapeutic protocols (conservative surgery in breast cancer, combined chemotherapy and radiotherapy in locally advanced, non small-cell lung cancer, interdisciplinary treatment of soft tissue sarcomas and ovarian tumours). Experimental research focuses on gene alterations as well as neoplastic transformation and progression; mechanisms of cell adhesion and migration; role of growth factors and growth factor receptors in haematological neoplasias; mechanisms of drug sensitivity and resistance; diet and cancer.

For more information: <http://www.cro.sanita.fvg.it/ReposCRO/IstitutoWebEng.pdf>



Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori di Milano (INT) - Italy



Since its establishment in 1928, INT has always aimed to provide the highest standard of patient care while pursuing preclinical and clinical research and promoting its swift translation into better prevention, diagnosis, therapy, rehabilitation, and survival.

INT has always supported the OECI being convinced that collaboration and intensive networking among cancer institutes are essential to face the complex challenge posed by cancer to patients, healthcare stakeholders and society. Together with the other OECI members, INT is proud to contribute by delineating and pursuing a common strategy in the battle against cancer and in the fight against inequalities in treatment within Europe.

Current research includes investigation of molecular and cellular determinants and mechanisms of tumor onset, growth and progression, as well as analysis of inherited factors underlying genetic susceptibility to cancer. More therapeutically oriented studies are aimed at developing and selecting new target-specific agents. Identification of growth signals and checkpoint functions driving cell proliferation and survival is essential for the detection and validation of predictors of tumor progression and treatment response, and helps define new targets for drug therapy and novel therapeutic approaches that modulates cellular response by combining chemo-preventive and anticancer agents. Antitumor immunity and the regulatory mechanisms interfering with the immune recognition of tumor cells are also being studied.

Finally, crucial in designing and conducting prospective clinical studies is the strong and continuous collaboration between the Experimental Oncology and Clinical Departments. INT research also focuses on dietary intervention studies targeting the general population, high-risk subgroups, and cancer patients to minimize the risk of recurrence. The studies of inequalities in survival and cure rates of cancer patients as the systematic description of cancer incidence, prevalence, and survival, explains survival differences between and within countries, to devise actions that may reduce such inequalities.

For more information: <http://www.istitutotumori.mi.it>



National Cancer Institute (NVI) Vilnius, Lithuania



NVI is the only special cancer treatment and research institution in Lithuania, which was established in 1931. The mission of NVI is to carry out international research in the field of oncology and to achieve results, which could improve cancer treatment efficiency and reduce mortality from cancer, to train scientists and highly qualified specialists, to strengthen the country's scientific potential and competitiveness in the European Research Area. In 2013 the NVI was accredited by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) as the Clinical Cancer Centre.

The main activities of the NVI is to coordinate cancer treatment, science and education aspects, help to solve the problem of cancer in the country, coordinate and carry out scientific research, education, as well as preventive and therapeutic activities in the field of oncology. In the recent past, all these activities have been in the Institute's vision but they became reality after Institute's reorganization in 2014. The OECI Accreditation was a fundamental factor to reach reorganisation and become a leading Institute in Lithuania.

The NVI has four scientific research laboratories (Molecular Oncology, Carcinogenesis and Tumour Pathophysiology, Immunology, Biomedical Physics) and a biobank. The Institute has the greatest scientific potential and the most experience in scientific research in oncology and related fields in Lithuania. The NVI clinic performs inpatient and outpatient (primary, secondary, tertiary) health care, provides preventive services, clinical trials, performs diagnostic interventional radiology, therapeutic interventional radiology, computed tomography examinations and procedures, provides nursing, rehabilitation, health education and personal health expertise services. Today, the clinical activity involves a lot of multidisciplinary teamwork which is especially important for successful cancer treatment results. In addition to that, the NVI activity focuses on individualized patient treatment: various tests are carried out during the treatment process in order to define which treatment method is the most appropriate for the patient.

For more information: <http://www.nvi.lt/>



Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

Portuguese Oncology Institute of Porto FG, EPE (IPO-Porto) - Portugal



IPO-Porto was established in April 1974 and, since then, it became the reference unit in oncology care in the North of Portugal, to where all the most complex cases are transferred to. Its mission is to render high quality, humanist and efficient oncology health care to the population. It is also part of the mission to develop research, training and teaching activities within oncology.

IPO-Porto is the largest cancer care institution in Portugal and it is a reference for 3.7 million habitants. Its strategic plan develops through three fundamental axis: centeredness of care in the patient, high standards of quality and safety, and integration of innovation in care. Research and development in oncology is crucial, leading the centre to increase the internal facilities and activity. IPO-Porto shares resources and projects under the model of consortium platforms and collaborative networks at National and European Level. Since 35 years ago, multidisciplinary and multi-professionality have been assumed as primary pattern of the organization, and that's why today IPO-Porto fulfils the most demanding criteria of oncologic disease management. The oncologic patient is the centre around which all care activity is build. As a result, multidisciplinary units are created for each pathology, named Pathology Clinics, as the basis of the whole care structure.

Largest Bone Marrow Transplants unit in Southwest Europe; largest Radio-oncology/Radiosurgery unit in Southwest Europe; OECI certification as a comprehensive cancer centre since 2009; founders of the largest R&D network for cancer in Portugal in 2013; 60% patients survive after 5th year; > 300 patients enrolled in clinical treatments/year; > 70 active clinical trials/year; 10.000 new patients/year; 3,700,000 target population in North Portugal; 10,000 Surgery/year; 270,000 Medical Appointments/year; 80,000 Radiotherapy session/year; 40,000 chemotherapy session/year; 2,000 Total Staff; 250 Medical Doctors; 320 Beds.

For more information: <http://ipoporto.pt/en>



The Greater Poland Cancer Centre (WCO) Poznan, Poland



The WCO was established in 1953 and is one of the largest oncology centres in Poland and in Europe. The centre provides medical service in the field of oncological surgery, head and neck cancer surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, gynaecological oncology, anaesthesiology, brachytherapy, and diagnostics. Over 20,000 patients are admitted to the hospital each year, and more than 6,000 surgical procedures and 6,500 radiotherapy treatments are performed annually. The Institute uses the most advanced therapeutic methods in the fight against neoplastic diseases with the hope of restoring patients to health while fully respecting their dignity.

The centre's primary research activity involves clinical studies, such as the high profile clinical trials Hypoprost and Cyberprost for prostate cancer and the HIOB trial for intraoperative breast radiotherapy. Other lines of investigation include the following: the origin of ovarian cancer; HPV infection in head and neck cancer; contributions to the cancer genome atlas; the physics-related and biological processes that biological material undergo during radiotherapy; the effect of cytostatic agents and ionizing radiation on cancer cells; and molecular imaging in radiation therapy planning.

WCO has established a Teaching and Conference Centre, which aims to serve the needs health care personnel, medical students, and patients. Numerous classes are organised in the centre's seminar and auditorium rooms for students of the Poznan University of Medical Sciences as well as other universities. Additionally, a variety of training courses, scientific conferences, and symposia are organised each year for both Polish and foreign physicians and other health care professionals.

For more information: <http://www.wco.pl/en>

Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

“Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta” Institute of Oncology (IOCN)- Cluj Napoca, Romania



The IOCN was established in 1929 by Prof. Dr. Iuliu Moldovan, under the name of “The Institute for Research and Prevention of Cancer”. It is one of the first cancer centres founded in Europe.

Starting from 1965, the Institute went through a period of modernization, initiated by Professor Ion Chiricuta. This is the reason why ever since August 10th 1990, it takes the name of “Ion Chiricuta” Oncology Institute.

During its 85 years of existence, the Oncology Institute has fulfilled a major role in the oncologic care of patients from the entire country, as well as in the conscience formation and cancer education of many generations of physicians of the most diverse specialities.

The Institute of Oncology is a comprehensive cancer centre of national public interest, with legal personality, subordinated to the Romanian Ministry of Public Health. At the same time, the Institute provides preventive, curative and palliative medical services in the oncology field and carries out education and research activities. In 2007, IOCN was the first oncology centre in Romania to become a full member of the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes. The Oncology Institute is the TEAM made of physicians, nurses, researchers, physicists, technical and administrative staff. It is essential for this TEAM to establish a bond with patients, based on trust and respect, in order to avert, to find out and solve the situations that could occur. In their fight with the disease, the patients benefit from the progress of science, but sometimes they have to fight with incertitude, and their destiny is overlapped with the destiny of the TEAM. The IOCN motto is “Together we bring back hope”. The strategic approach of European oncology, in terms of clinical care and research for the benefit of the patient, is a great challenge and, therefore, a comprehensive collaboration between all OECC members becomes indispensable.

For more information: <http://www.iocn.ro/en>

The Netherland Cancer Institute (NKI), Amsterdam, The Netherlands



The NKI was established on October 10th , 1913. The founders, Rotgans, professor of Surgery, De Bussy, publisher, and De Vries, professor of Pathology, wanted to create a cancer institute ‘where patients suffering from malignant growths could be treated adequately and where cancer and related diseases could be studied’. They bought a house on one of the canals in Amsterdam and named it the ‘Antoni van Leeuwenhoek Huis’, after the famous Dutch microscopist. The clinic had room for 17 patients, while the laboratory could accommodate 8 to 10 scientists. Nowadays, the organisation employs 2,435 people of which amongst others 750 scientists and scientific support personnel. In 2015 the hospital will have 152 medical specialists, 210 beds, an outpatients clinic that receives 29,000 patients each year, 10 operating theaters and 11 radiotherapy units. It is the only dedicated cancer centre in the Netherlands and maintains an important role as a national and international centre of scientific and clinical expertise, development and training.

Various site visits and performance reports rank the Netherlands Cancer Institute among the most prominent Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCC) in Europe and especially its performance in translational research programs is considered to be outstanding. The designation as CCC by the OECC and our participation in - and contribution to – developments on European level are important matters, as they stimulate the Institute to benchmark the performance, giving opportunities to share the experiences. It is the ambition of the NKI to keep improving its patient care and research performance, and to keep contributing to practice changing innovations.

The NKI is active in the full translational research spectrum and has facilities for fundamental, early and late translational and clinical research. Most of the research is investigator initiated and the majority of projects is funded from competitive sources.

For more information: <http://www.nki.nl>

Introducing the Bench-Can Pilot Sites

King's Health Partners Integrated Cancer Centre (KHPICC), London, UK

 KING'S HEALTH PARTNERS
An Academic Health Sciences Centre for London Pioneering better health for all

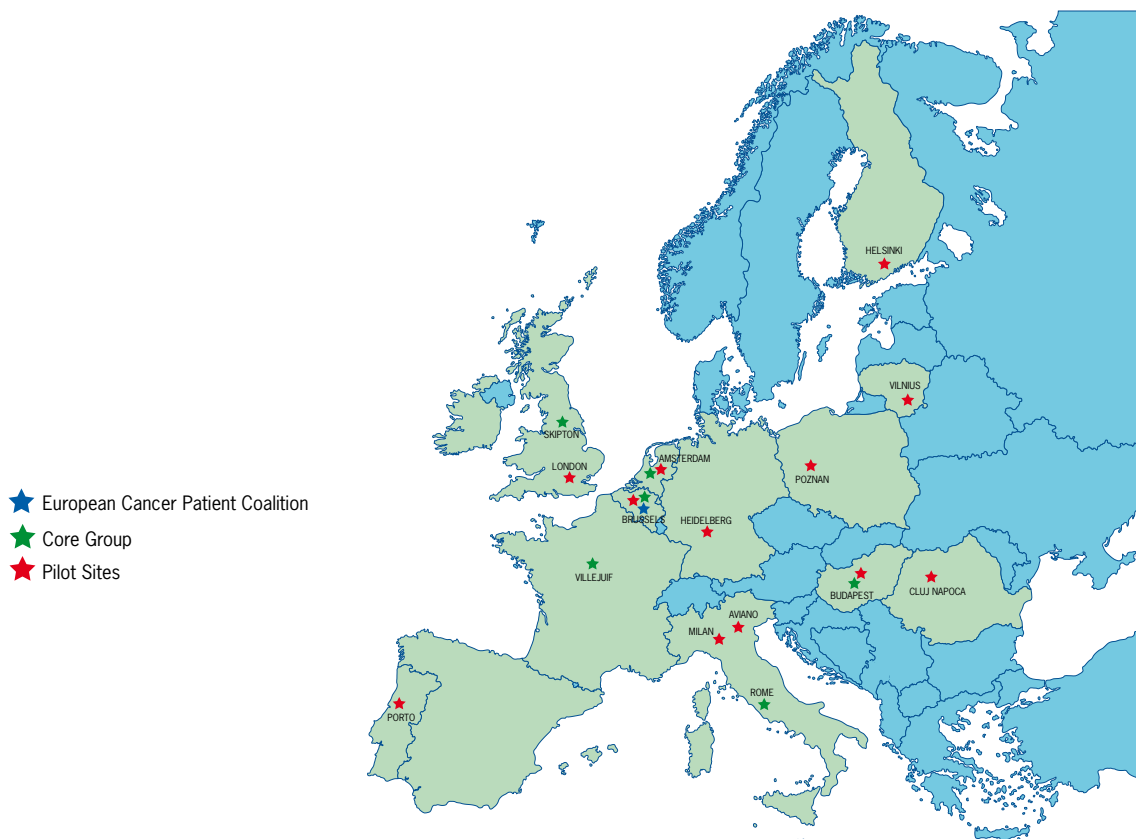
KHPICC is a comprehensive cancer centre developing innovations that improve care for patients, with a cadre of world-class researchers and it is the largest provider of NHS-Funded cancer services in London. One of only five Academic Health Sciences Centres (AHSCs) in the United Kingdom, the KHPICC comprises King's College London, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Trust and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. The Institute is recognised as a national and international leader in cancer immunology, cancer imaging, the application of applied mathematics to interrogate complex data sets, epidemiology, palliative care, breast, thoracic, prostate cancer, haemato-oncology and cancer policy/global health. The Comprehensive Cancer Imaging Centre, the Experimental Cancer Medicine Centre and the Breakthrough Breast Cancer Unit are all based at King's Health Partners.

KHPICC is a high profile member of the London Cancer Alliance, and with other London AHSCs, (University College London and Imperial College) are part of the Francis Crick Institute, an inter-disciplinary medical research institute translating basic science for patient benefit. The mission is to increase the life expectancy for the people we care for and alleviate suffering; to deepen knowledge and understanding of cancer; to enhance the experience of patients, careers, families and staff. The KHPICC vision is to provide the very best cancer service to our patients by combining first class clinical care with ground-breaking research and high quality training and development.

Over the next five years KHPICC will improve outcomes and experience for cancer patients with complex needs, open the new Cancer Centre at Guy's Hospital, embed whole-person care across the cancer pathway and bring treatment programmes to patients at home, test and develop new biological and cellular therapies in a range of cancers, continue to drive the cancer global health program through partnerships with emerging economies, particularly India.

For more information: <http://www.kingshealthpartners.org/info/icc>





Establishing a Reference Network for Rare Cancers

In 2013 the European Commission (EC) decided to start developing networks of reference for rare diseases, in which the definition of rare diseases is related to a low incidence. A list of Rare Cancers has been produced by RARECARE, a European Project whose a new edition titled RARECARENet has been recently approved by the DG Health and Consumers. So far, the incidence of a rare cancer should be less than 6/100.000/year. In view of the cross border healthcare Directive 2011/24, the EC started a procedure in which all EU countries are asked to indicate "centres of expertise/excellence" on rare diseases, based on a proposal for criteria by EUCERD, the EU Committee of Experts on Rare Diseases, recently replaced by the EC Expert Group on Rare Diseases.

The OECI Members can apply in their countries to be recognized in compliance with the above criteria; next to this approach, a system of Networks of Reference (NoR) will be launched and a call for networks is expected in the course of 2015. The long-time experience of the of the OECI Accreditation Programme, makes it likely that OECI may be part of the coordination of such a network.

Therefore, the OECI needs to regroup and select certain rare cancers - as covering the total list seems not feasible from the very start- and interact with other Organisations or projects, such as ESMO and the RARECARENet, which are working in the same direction.

Advanced Breast Cancer Consensus Conference

European School of Oncology
Learning to care

ABC3

Bridging the Gap

Advanced Breast Cancer

5-7 November 2015 • Lisbon, Portugal

Third International Consensus Conference

Chairs:
F. Cardoso, PT • L. Norton, US • E.P. Winer, US • A. Costa, IT/CH

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The ABC3 guidelines will be developed by ESO and ESMO

The ABC3 conference and guidelines are endorsed by

The ABC3 conference is held with support from

and under the auspices of

Revision of the OECl Accreditation and Designation Standards

The Accreditation and Designation Working Group of the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECl) devoted many efforts in the evaluation and revision of the quality standards for comprehensive and multidisciplinary cancer care in European cancer centres.

The current first edition set of quality standard have been developed and validated in the period 2006 till the launch of the A&D Programme in the 2008. From 2010 onwards, the accreditation programme was completed with additional quality and quantity requirements. The expertise gained thanks to the A&D of the 29 centres which entered the process, and the feed-back coming from the Auditors, have given inputs to the standards and make suggestions of needed changes.

This was used to reformulate / delete / add standards (April – May 2013). The first draft has been published online in order to invite the cancer Community to provide comments, suggestions, inputs and was also presented for comments to a selected group of well experienced auditors, resulting in a second draft (May – June 2013). This second draft contained specific remarks on certain standards that have been presented to experts in oncology and to the European Cancer Organisation (ECCO) Member Organisations (August – September 2013).

The comments were used to reformulate a new draft with discussion topics during the OECl General Assembly in Cluj, June 2014. This draft version was finalized with inputs of OECl Members, the ECPC, and several OECl working groups, e.g. palliative care, during the consensus conference held on September 10-11 in Brussels at the Institut Jules Bordet. The final version of the revised standards has been presented and discussed in Brussels by the OECl Board on December 2014.

The new (second) version of the OECl Accreditation and Designation User Manual will be soon published, completing the revision process started in 2013.

For the Centres applying to the Accreditation and Designation Programme from middle 2015, the revised quality standard will be adopted. The same will apply for the re-accreditation process of the centres having already received the certification in the previous years.



Accreditation is a process in which an independent organisation evaluates a health care provider and certifies that the provider meets validated quality standards. An accrediting organisation's survey includes an evaluation of the provider's clinical organisation structure, as well as other aspects of the provider's operations such as administration, personnel and information management.

Comprehensive Cancer Care based on a Network: the OECI position

On March 2014, the new Cancer Control Joint Action (CanCon), financed by the European Agency of Healthcare and Consumers, has been launched. The project aims to improve the organisation and quality of Comprehensive Cancer Care.

Recently, the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) being deeply involved in the process of Accreditation and Designation of European Comprehensive Cancer Centres and on Benchmarking of Comprehensive Cancer Care, entered into a formal exchange of opinions with CanCon on the Clinical Cancer Care Networks issues, the below cited as “CCCN”.

An article on the OECI point of view on the argument, has been published on ecancermedicalsecience (ecancer 2014, 8:ed43 DOI: 10.3332/ecancer.2014.ed43) to facilitate an enlarged debate.

The tendency in some European countries is to strengthen their cancer services in the form of cancer networks, instead of Clinical or Comprehensive Cancer Centres. The OECI believes that an accredited and designated Clinical Cancer Centre “CICC” or Comprehensive Cancer Centre “CCC” should be the core and the formal leader of cancer care in a cancer network in the EU Member States or Regions. This is to avoid that the international accepted description and qualifications of “Comprehensive” and “Cancer Centre”, lose their meanings, confusing European Healthcare Consumers and Policy Makers to a large degree.

The OECI is proposing to adopt a definition that could harmonize both visions and help to avoid inequalities in cancer care giving to all the citizens the possibility to receive the best available treatments.

For the OECI, a CCCN is a legally structured and formalized cooperation in which clinical cancer care is organised and provided under the responsibility of an OECI-designated CICC or CCC, where research and education are organised and provided under the responsibility of an OECI-designated centre for the entire network.

The OECI certification/designation follows a well-defined and agreed criteria and parameters of quality and internal organisation of a centre. Therefore the referring centre of a CCCN should be based on the OECI requirements. This means that without an OECI recognized CCC or CICC in the network, a CCCN cannot be designated by OECI. The CCC/CICC must have full responsibility for care (CICC) or care/research/education (CCC) according to all the A&D criteria.

The CCCN should be based on a legal agreement between CCC/CICC and all partners of the network, upon coordination and division of tasks and responsibilities of the partners, providing data as requested in the OECI quantitative database as network, as well as the separate members, and adapting to a uniform quality system for continuous process evaluation of the quality of the cancer care provided in the different partner hospitals.

A CCCN is meant to have formal jurisdiction over the oncology pathways and the possibility to organize common and verifiable rules concerning tumour board meetings, process management, transfer etc. Moreover, it should adapt to common guidelines and to common indicators of outcome.

A CCCN should also contain at least one institution responsible for teaching (CICCN) or for teaching and research (CCCN).

A similar structure is meant to provide to the CCC/CICC a legal central position within a CCCN, particularly concerning the governance of the network. The final aim of this structure should guarantee the loss of cooperation within different areas, with the risk to legalize suboptimal functioning of a network.

The OECI standards, developed within years of A&D process, should help to guarantee efficiency and efficacy, provided the best cancer care to patients and a better organisation of related services.

A formal interaction with professor Lucio Luzzatto, the leader of the CanCon WP6, has been initiated to discuss and verify the feasibility to reach a common position and to identify, also for the CCCN, a standard approach to evaluate the comprehensiveness.

For more information: http://www.oeci.eu/ReadNews.aspx?Id_News=2

OECI 2014/2015 Yearbook

The Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) proudly announces the publication of the 2014/2015 Yearbook, which is dedicated to all the OECI Members and collaborating partners.

The Yearbook is meant to restore the long history of the Organisation created in 1979, with an overview on all the OECI Past Presidents, and to promote its up-to-date Membership, with a description of all the OECI Institutes and Cancer Centres that daily contribute to fight cancer.

The Yearbook highlights the Institutes which are in the certification process or which have already received the Accreditation & Designation certificate, in the view of remarking the stimulus towards betterments, which is the core of the OECI and of its Members.

The Accreditation is the recognition of a long procedure during which the centres have to self-assess their own competences and organisation, accepting to take part to a continuous process towards benchmarking and upgrading for the benefit of the patients and to overcome inequalities in cancer care.

With this publication, that is a catalogue of some of the most representative Institutes and professionals working in the field of cancer research and care, the OECI would also like to encourage joint initiatives and collaborations both within its Members and outside the Organisation, even beyond the borders of Europe.

Few pages are devoted to present some of the OECI Partners, in particular the European Cancer Patients Coalition (ECPC), the European Association for Cancer Research (EACR) and the European School of Oncology (ESO), which are allies in the fight against cancer and precious collaborators in joint projects and in the organisation of training activities.

Ecancermedicalsecience, being the OECI Official Journal, is of course introduced as well as the OECI counterpart in the United States, the Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI), to which the last two pages of the Yearbook are dedicated.

The 2015/15 Yearbook is now in its dissemination phase and soon will reach stakeholders in EU and in the US, increasing the visibility of the European Organisation of Cancer Institutes and of its members and partners.



To download the electronic version:
www.oeci.eu/Attachments/OECI_Yearbook_2014-2015.pdf

30 Participation Grants available for the “EACR-OECI Conference on Precision Medicine for Cancer”

EACR-OECI Conference Precision Medicine for Cancer

1 - 4 March 2015 • Neumünster Abbey, Luxembourg

30 Participation Grants of up to €1000

We are very pleased to be able to award up to 30 Participation Grants to attend this important meeting. The grants are intended to support full attendance (registration, travel and accommodation) for PhD students/postdocs who completed their PhD less than 4 years ago, who would not otherwise be able to participate due to a lack of funds.

Apply via the conference website before 26 January

Conference Overview

Recent advances in technology have provided an unprecedented opportunity to develop platforms for implementing precision/personalised medicine in cancer. This conference will discuss the challenges that face us in implementing these approaches.

Who should attend?

This meeting is of interest to fundamental, translational and clinical cancer researchers alike, as it will cover several aspects of precision treatment of cancer, ranging from tumour heterogeneity and novel metabolic targets to circulating tumour cells and new drug target discovery strategies.

The topics that will be covered in the conference include:

- Precision medicines in today's and tomorrow's cancer treatment.
- Tumour heterogeneity and drug response.
- Drug resistance.
- Novel strategies for drug target discovery.
- Cancer immunotherapy
- High throughput approaches to analysis of tumour samples
- Next generation sequencing approaches
- The implementation of personalised medicine

Important Dates

Participation Grants application deadline: 26 January 2015

Registration deadline: 01 February 2015

Supported by the Fonds National de la Recherche, Luxembourg



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Bursaries up to
€1000
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Scientific Organising Committee

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Simone Niclou Luxembourg

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Visit the website at www.eacr.org/precisionmedicine2015



Training Course on “Diagnostic Molecular Pathology from Pre-analytics to Diagnosis”

The course to be held in Graz from March 30th to April 1st, 2015, is the second event on basic molecular pathology organized by the Medical University of Graz and the European Society of Pathology, in collaboration with Organisation of the European Cancer Institutes.

The training course will be devoted to the dissemination of basic knowledge on molecular biology to better understand diagnostic procedures in molecular pathology in fixed and paraffin embedded tissues; it is addressed to pathologists, molecular biologists and technicians working in pathology departments and to young researchers involved in clinical research.

For further information and registration:

<http://www.medunigraz.at/pathologie/molpathcourse15>



5th EACR-OECI Joint Training Course on “Molecular Pathology Approach to Cancer”

The European Association for Cancer Research (EACR) and the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) are jointly organising the Fifth edition of the training course on Molecular Pathology Approach to Cancer, to be held in Amsterdam from 11th to 13th May 2015.

Many topics - such as the next generation sequencing, the targeted therapy in melanoma, novel findings in breast, colorectal, ovarian, endometrial and kidney cancers, and the role of pathologists in precision medicine will be covered during the three day course.

The 2015 edition focuses on the practical application of molecular tests in pathology, aiming at practicing pathologists, residents in pathology, molecular biologists with interest in diagnostic pathology and young medical oncologists, in order to promote a multidisciplinary approach for the successful translation of scientific advancements into useful biomarkers and for the confirmations of the promises and expectations of precision medicine.

The European Society of Pathology will contribute to the 2015 edition of the course, assigning 5 bursaries of 500 Euros each. 5 bursaries will also be assigned respectively by the EACR and by the OECI.

February 28th is the deadline to send applications for grants.

For further information and registration visit the course website at www.eacr.org/mpathcourse2015



European Association
for Cancer Research



OECI 2015 Oncology Days Porto (Portugal) June 22nd – 24th 2015

For the third time, the Directors of the European Cancer Centres will convene in Portugal, a Country which, since the OECI's foundation, has shown an extraordinary interest in the Organisation, as witnessed by the participation of the cancer centres of the "Instituto Portugues de Oncologia Francisco Gentil EPE" network, in the OECI Accreditation and Designation Programme.

The 2015 OECI Oncology Days programme sums up concisely how the process of OECI Accreditation and Designation, 5 years since the release of the first certification, helps to improve the organisational system, to secure the quality of our member institutes and to guarantee appropriate care to our patients, through multidisciplinary and comprehensiveness.

The 2015 programme devotes 1 and ½ day to the meeting of the pathologists which will debate on "Tumor Heterogeneity and Next Generation Sequencing". The European Society of Pathology, the European Infrastructure BBMRI and the EurocanPlatform Project are jointly committed to the organisation of the scientific conference.

On June 23rd an OECI Core Activities Session will take place. During the meeting some hot topics, such as comprehensiveness, certification and designation, partnership with industry and health economics will be debated. The conference represents a practical effort to improve the quality of care and research and to evaluate the cost-benefits linked with the application of new therapeutics, thereby avoiding unnecessary care approaches.

The Oncology Days are open to the scientific community without a registration fee.

For further information and registration: http://www.oeci.eu/ReadNews.aspx?Id_News=67

Organisation of European Cancer Institutes

OECI 2015
Oncology Days

PORTO 2015
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES
AND RELATED EVENTS**
*Instituto Português de Oncologia
do Porto (IPO-Porto)*
June 22nd-24th

In collaboration with:



The OECI membership 2015

Austria

- Comprehensive Cancer Center Graz, Graz
- Zentrum für Tumorerkrankungen Linz Onkologisches Leitspital für Oberösterreich, Linz
- Comprehensive Cancer Center Vienna, Vienna

Belgium

- ★ Institut Jules Bordet (IJB), Brussels
- ★ Kankercentrum Brussel, Brussels
- Institut Roi Albert II, Brussels

Czech Republic

- Masarykov onkologický ústav, Brno
- Institut biostatistiky a analýz Lékařské a Přírodovědecké fakulty Masarykovy university, Brno

Denmark

- ★ Kræftens Bekæmpelse Center for Kræftforskning, Copenhagen

Estonia

- ★ Sihtasutus Tartu Ülikooli Kliinikum, Tartu
- North Estonia Medical Centre, Tallin

Finland

- ★ HYKS Syöpäkeskus Helsinki University, Helsinki

France

- ★ Gustave Roussy, Villejuif
- Centre de Lutte Contre le Cancer Paul Strauss, Strasbourg
- Institut Curie, Paris
- Centre Henri Becquerel, Rouen
- Centre Leon Berard, Lyon
- Centre Alexis Vautrin, Nancy

Germany

- ★ Universitäts KrebsCentrum Dresden, Dresden
- Charité Comprehensive Cancer Centre, Berlin
- Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum (DKFZ), Heidelberg

Hungary

- ★ Országos Onkológiai Intézet, Budapest
- National Koranyi Institute of TB and Pulmonology, Budapest

Italy

- ★ Centro di Riferimento Oncologico, Istituto Nazionale Tumori, Aviano
- ★ Istituto Europeo di Oncologia, Milan
- ★ Azienda Ospedaliera Arcispedale Santa Maria Nuova IRCCS, Reggio Emilia
- ★ Istituto Tumori Giovanni Paolo II, Istituto di Ricovero e Cura a Carattere Scientifico, Bari
- ★ IRCCS Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria San Martino - IST - Istituto Nazionale per la Ricerca sul Cancro, Genova
- ★ Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori di Milano, Milan

- ★ Istituto Nazionale Tumori IRCCS "Fondazione G.Pascale" (INT-Pascale), Napoli
- ★ Istituto Oncologico Veneto IRCCS-IOV, Padova
- ★ IRCCS, Centro di Riferimento Oncologico della Basilicata (CROB), Rionero in Vulture
- ★ Istituto Nazionale Tumori Regina Elena, Roma
- Istituto Scientifico Romagnolo per lo Studio e la Cura dei Tumori [IRST]-IRCCS, Meldola-Forlì
- European School of Oncology (ESO), Milan
- IFOM - FIRC Institute of Molecular Oncology, Milan
- Ospedale San Raffaele (OSR), Milan
- Ente Ospedaliero Ospedali Galliera, Genova
- IRCCS - Istituto di Ricerche Farmacologiche Mario Negri, Milan
- Nerviano Medical Sciences Group S.r.l., Nerviano

Lithuania

- ★ Institute of Oncology, Vilnius University, Vilnius

Norway

- ★ Oslo Universitetssykehus (OUS), Norway

Poland

- Wielkopolskie Centrum Onkologii, Poznan

Portugal

- ★ Instituto Português de Oncologia de Coimbra FG, EPE, Coimbra
- ★ Instituto Português de Oncologia de Lisboa FG, EPE, Lisbon
- ★ Instituto Português de Oncologia do Porto FG, EPE, Porto

Romania

- The "Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta" Institute of Oncology (IOCN), Cluj
- SC RTC Radiology Therapeutic Center – Amethyst Radiotherapy, Otopeni

Russia

- Tatarstan Cancer Center "TCC", Kazan
- N.N. Blokhin Russian Cancer Research Centre, Moscow
- P.A. Herzen Moscow Cancer Research Institute, Moscow

Serbia

- Institute of Oncology (IOV) Sremska Kamenica Novi Sad, Sremska Kamenica

Slovakia

- Ústav experimentálnej onkológie SAV, Bratislava

Slovenia

- Onkološki inštitut Ljubljana, Ljubiana

Spain

- ★ Fundación Instituto Valenciano de Oncología IVO Foundation, Valencia
- Institut Català d'Oncologia, Barcelona
- Instituto Madrileño de Oncología (Grupo IMO), Madrid

Sweden

- Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm

The Nederland

- ★ **Netherlands Cancer Institute**, Amsterdam
- **Maastricht University Medical Centre**, Maastricht
- **Radboudumc Centrum voor Oncologie**, Nijmegen
- **IKNL Integraal Kankercentrum Nederland**, Utrecht
- **Erasmus MC Daniel den Hoed Cancer Centre**, Rotterdam

Turkey

- **Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Onkoloji Enstitüsü**, Izmir

Ukraine

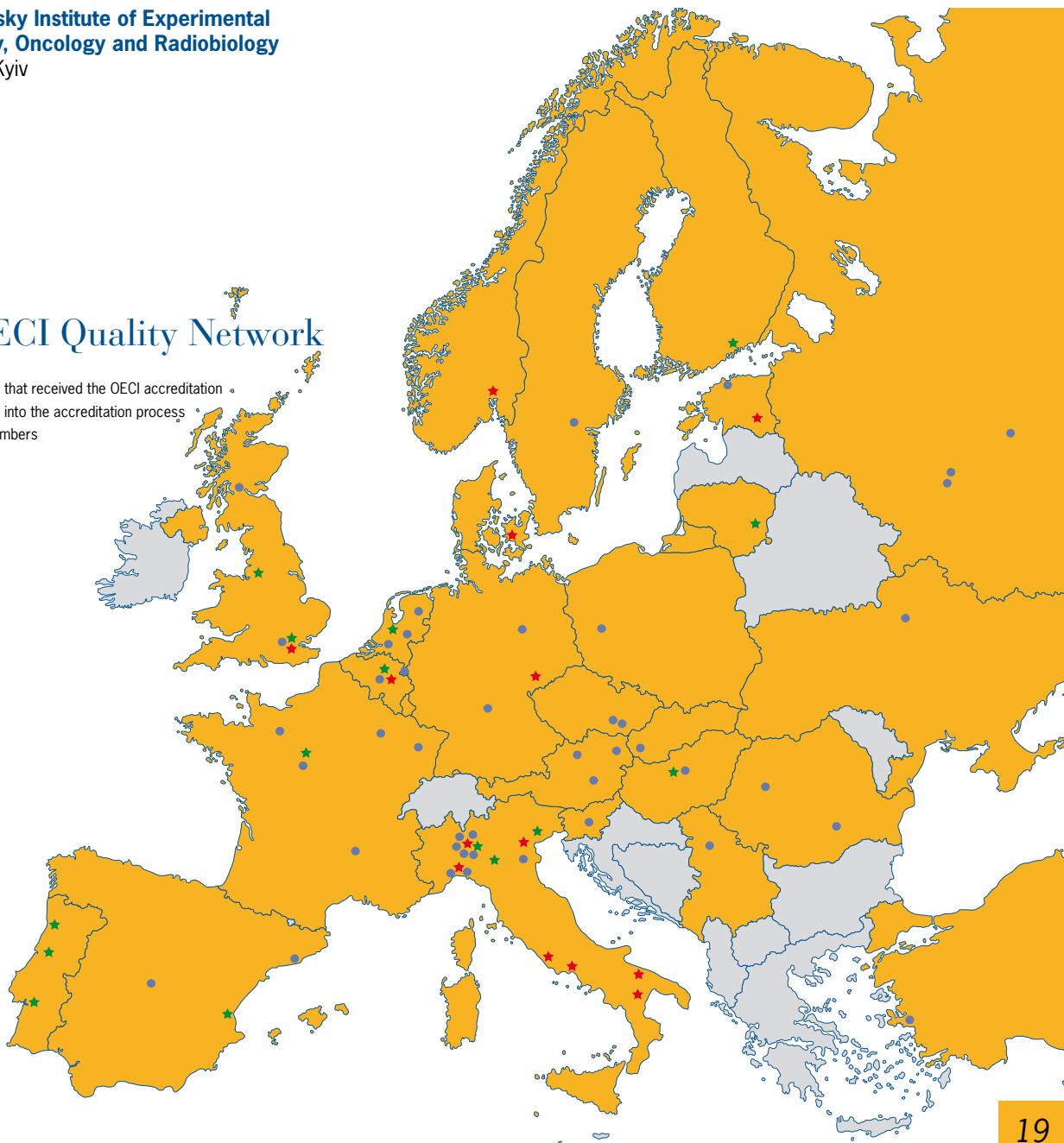
- **RE Kavetsky Institute of Experimental Pathology, Oncology and Radiobiology (IEPOR)**, Kyiv

United Kingdom

- ★ **Cambridge Cancer Centre**, Cambridge
- ★ **The Christie NHS Foundation Trust**, Manchester
- ★ **King's Health Partners Integrated Cancer Centre**, London
- **Cancer Research UK Glasgow Centre**, Glasgow
- **Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust**, London

The OECI Quality Network

- ★ OECI Members that received the OECI accreditation
- ★ OECI Members into the accreditation process
- Other OECI Members





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