



Establishing a National Cancer Mission Hub

The NCCP Collaborates with the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) to establish a National Cancer Mission Hub in Ireland

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Establishing of Cancer Mission Hubs: Networks and Synergies (ECHO_S) is a new three-year European consortium supported by the EU Mission on Cancer and brings together from 58 organisations from governmental, healthcare, research, academic and non-profit sectors distributed across 28 countries (€6 million funding 2023-2026).

National Cancer Mission Hubs (NCMHs) will be created in 28 countries (25 Member States, 3 Associated Countries). Ireland is represented within the ECHO_S project by the HSE National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/cancer/>) as the primary national lead and the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI: <https://www.aicri.org/>) as co-participant. Both the NCCP and AICRI will collaborate closely with the consortium coordinators and leading experts across Europe, to establish a National Cancer Mission Hub (NCMH) in Ireland. In terms of project leadership, Prof. Donal Brennan is the National Clinical Lead for Cancer Research and chairs the NCCP Cancer Research Group. Prof. William Gallagher is a cancer biologist based in University College Dublin and co-lead of AICRI. Both the NCCP and AICRI will collaborate closely to establish a NCMH in Ireland. This combined effort

will coordinate research and innovation and healthcare actions on cancer, moving policy-making processes towards people-centric healthcare and research systems in ways that cannot be achieved through individual efforts and fragmented initiatives.

The NCMHs will encourage participation from stakeholders and citizens in cancer-related policy dialogues at EU, national, regional and local levels. It will help to advance better integration of cancer research and policy. Further information on the hubs is available on the ECHO_S website (<https://cancermissionhubs.eu/>)

Bridging cancer care, cancer policy and research

This establishment of a NCMH in Ireland aligns with Ireland's National Cancer Strategy 2017-26, which has a particular focus on involving patients in their own cancer care and further developing the role of research to improve cancer services, as well as aligning with the principles of Sláintecare and the involvement of citizens in how Ireland shapes its health services. It is a key step towards strengthening the voice of national stakeholders in cancer policies in Europe. It will foster national and international collaboration, promote inclusivity, and drive innovation in cancer care. It will also help to accelerate cancer



research in Ireland. The NCMH is an opportunity to tailor our cancer landscape to the precise needs of our patients and society and it is expected to develop some guidelines and tools that can help other organisations to implement relevant, impact-driven, research and policy dialogues in meaningful areas of health and beyond.

Representatives of AICRI and the NCCP attended the launch of the ECHO_S project in Lisbon in early May 2023. The kick-off meeting in Lisbon allowed the project partners to meet, to learn more about the European Strategy on Cancer and hear about other EU-funded projects in cancer research and service delivery. The launch meeting provided a better understanding of EC expectations for ECHO_S and the National Cancer Mission Hubs. Partners also learned more about the ECHO_S project's six work packages

Time to Act

Cancer represents a global health challenge and the fight against cancer can no longer be an isolated endeavour. Currently, research, innovation and healthcare initiatives are largely siloed within specific communities and the engagement of citizens



is either poor or non-existent. Supported by the European Beating Cancer Plan and the EU Mission on Cancer, cancer occupies a central place within the European political agenda. Europe's political leaders are now championing a pan-European cooperation towards a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach, and

a data-informed, citizen-focused, research-driven agenda. The time to act is now.

AICRI, in collaboration with the NCCP, is organising an EU Cancer Mission Day – Ireland in Dublin on 26th September 2023. This event will provide a platform for academic researchers, clinician scientists and other healthcare

professionals, charity partners and policymakers, as well as those with a lived experience of cancer, to come together and share their insights, knowledge and experiences to explore innovative approaches to address cancer challenges. Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD, will provide a keynote address at

this event. There will be five main sessions as follows:

Session 1: Ireland's Participation in EU Cancer Mission Projects

Session 2: How Can We All Benefit from Europe's Beating Cancer Plan?

Session 3: The Lived Experience at the Heart of National and European Cancer Initiatives

Session 4: Co-ordination of Cancer Research at National and European Levels

Session 5: Engagement with Ireland's National Cancer Mission Hub going forward

Attendance in-person at this event is now sold out, however, if you are most welcome to join the event online by registering on Eventbrite (<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/eu-cancer-mission-day-ireland-online-tickets-682109025457>) and to view the agenda.

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Oncology Focus News

Launch of Hereditary Cancer Model of Care



Speakers at the launch (L to R) – Rory Kennelly, Noelle Cullinan, David Gallagher, Bernie Carter, Jean O'Neill, Yvonne Hanhauser, Marie Duff, Pat Fahey, Risteárd Ó Laoide, Triona McCarthy

The National Cancer Control Programme recently launched a national Hereditary Cancer Model of Care at our offices on Parnell Street, which was the culmination of many months of work by a broad multidisciplinary Advisory Group.

This Hereditary Cancer Model of Care provides the blueprint for the necessary development of services for the identification and management of people with an inherited cancer predisposition (e.g.

Lynch syndrome or BRCA gene cancer risk), in order to harness the power of genetics to reduce cancer risk, and improve patient outcomes and quality of life. It complements the National Strategy for Accelerating Genetic and Genomic Medicine in Ireland (launched in Dec 2022), which addresses a number of the key enablers such as building the genetics and genomics workforce and strengthening our infrastructure.

Speakers at the launch gave an overview of the Model of Care and of initiatives underway within hereditary cancer services. Mr Pat Fahey and Ms Jean O'Neill provided valuable insight to the patient experience of living with an inherited predisposition to cancer.

The model of care will ensure/support the development of:

- Development of national guidance to underpin standardised best practice, including mainstreaming of cancer genetic testing
- Equitable access to hereditary cancer services for all
- Clear governance and clarity regarding the roles of national genetics and genomic structures, specialist cancer genetics services and regional cancer predisposition services, within an overarching model of care
- Commitment to the Sláintecare principles of right person, right place, right time – through the integration of genetic

assessment and testing into regional services, with access to specialist genetic expertise as required

- Maximal use of technological solutions
- Timely access to genetics assessment and testing, including specialist cancer genetics expertise as required
- Timely access to clinical management of cancer predisposition, including risk reduction options
- Comprehensive and coordinated approaches to ongoing management
- Quality assurance of service
- Access to high quality patient information, psychological support and peer support for patients
- Education and training of health care professionals, including accredited training for those delivering mainstreamed pathways