

Message from the OECI President

We all know that the cancer problem is increasing both in Europe and worldwide. Parallel with an increasing cancer burden, due both to the increase of incidence but also to patients living longer with chronic cancer disease, the complexity in cancer care and research is escalating.

European cancer research is often criticized because it is fragmented. To avoid the fragmentation the cancer research should be integrated into a research continuum from basic through preclinical and clinical research to structured implementation and evaluation of new diagnostic and treatment methods in routine care. The ideal integration of the research process can be achieved in the comprehensive cancer centre (CCC), since this structure is the only one where all research components exist and integration with cancer care is natural. Further, education has a position in the CCC and is integrated with care and research.

According to the OECI vision a CCC should be a core and build a virtual organization to reach all patients in a defined geographic area. The individual CCC can offer multidisciplinary in cancer care and integration of the cancer research. However the critical mass for research is often lacking. Therefore we need to share resources and increase collaboration to reach the critical mass by formalizing a network to harmonize the infrastructure of CCCs. The network will provide the scientific platform which can successively be enlarged through the OECI collaboration. This will ensure the quality of cancer care outside the individual CCC and also make more patients available for cancer research.

At present there are 52 centres being members of OECI. Probably Europe needs around 100 CCCs to serve the population and to form a strong research structure. An important mission for OECI is to establish a relationship with basic and preclinical research centres in Europe. Integrating basic and clinical research centres with a network of CCCs will facilitate the development of personalized medicine as well as the development of new diagnostic and treatment methods.

Ulrik Ringborg, MD, Ph.D.

Professor, Director of Cancer Center Karolinska

OECI Members

Institut Jules Bordet, Centre des Tumeurs, **BL**
Oncologic Center, AZ-VUB, **BL**
Masaryk Memorial Cancer Institute, **CZ**
Danish Cancer Society, Institute of Cancer Biology, **DK**
Tartu University Hospital, **EE**
Institut Curie, **FR**
Institut Bergonié Centre Rég de Lutte contre le Cancer, **FR**
Institut Sainte Catherine, **FR**
Centre Léon Bérard, **FR**
Institut Gustave Roussy, **FR**
Centre Antoine Lacassagne, **FR**
Centre Paul Papin, CRLCC, **FR**
Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, **DE**
University Cancer Center Dresden Carl Gustav Carus, **DE**
'Metaxa' Cancer Hospital Of Piraeus, **GR**
Anticancer Oncological Hospital of Athens 'Saint Savvas', **GR**
Agi Anargiri General Oncological Hospital of Kifissia, **GR**
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Istituto Tumori Bari, **IT**
IST Istituto Nazionale per la Ricerca sul Cancro, **IT**
European Institute of Oncology, **IT**
Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, **IT**
Fondazione 'G.Pascali', **IT**
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Clinical Cancer Centre Kazan, **RU**
Blokhin Russian Cancer Research Centre, **RU**
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**High Innovative
Quality Cancer Care
through
Coordinating Research
and Education**

The OECI mission
is to bring together the cancer research and care institutions of the EU in order to create a critical mass of expertise and competence with the view of building and maintaining a consensus on the best models of oncology, developing concrete affordable and realistic solutions to effectively combat cancer, and to improve the quality of life for the patients in the EU.

OECI in a Nutshell

Initiated back in 1977 to promote greater cooperation among the world's cancer centres and institutes in the field of cancer collaborative research the «Organization of European Cancer Institutes» had its first General Assembly in 1980 taking the first steps to work out structures for efficient cooperation to overcome the linguistic and traditional research heterogeneity of Europe were taken. In step with the ongoing developments in Europe in 2005 the organization was remodelled into OECI-EEIG (Organization of European Cancer Institutes and European Economic Interest Grouping).

OECI is a continuously growing and developing network presently regrouping 52 cancer centres across Europe who is dynamically working in crosscut expertise projects organised mainly within Working Groups.

The main ongoing projects

They are financed through membership fees and supported also by external funders such as the European Commission and Wallenberg Foundation, Sweden.

- **Accreditation project** which aims to define consensual quality standards and criteria for European oncology and develop a tool for professionals enabling performances of the institutions to be assessed both internally and externally. To increase the efficacy of cancer research and to strengthen joint public private research in Europe for more competitive cancer research a database of cancer centres describing in detail the infrastructures and human resources present will be developed in order to allow identification of the structures where accelerated development of innovative treatments or high quality clinical research is feasible. The concept of Comprehensive Cancer Center with integration of care, research and education is fundamental. Criteria for European Comprehensive Cancer Centres as well as harmonization of such centres to reach a critical mass for research are important goals.

- **TRANSFOG project** which aims at the systematic identification and functional characterization of novel cancer genes with high potential diagnostic and therapeutic value in breast, colon and lung cancer. The project will greatly increase Europe competitiveness, provide a huge structuring

effect on the ERA in the field of functional oncogenomics, and depict several new molecular targets for anticancer drug discovery and for advanced cancer diagnosis.

- **Pathobiology project** which has the task to standardise and harmonize the pathology in European cancer centres. European tissue banking, with a focus on TuBaFrost, plans to set up an OECI platform for difficult histology cases using Virtual Microscopy to present the complete histology for every case and discuss, on a Web-based forum, the different cases at the European level.

- **New Technologies project** which aims at creating a network within the OECI centres to co-ordinate individual efforts from European Cancer Institutes in the development of new technologies in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Working Groups and Chairpersons

WG Accreditation - Mahasti Saghatchian

WG Education - Claudio Lombardo

WG Guidelines - Philip Thiery

WG New Technologies - Dirk Verellen

WG Pathobiology - Peter Riegman

The Current Board of OECI-EEIG

President - Ulrik Ringborg

Executive Secretary - Guy Storme

Former President - Thomas Tursz

Vice President - Marco A. Pierotti

Elected Member - Wim Van Harten

Elected Member, Treasurer - Antonio Llombart Bosch

How to become a member ?

To request information on conditions of affiliation to OECI and a membership application pack please contact our permanent office
oeci@skynet.be

For more details on the structure of OECI and on types of membership available within our organization go to :
www.oeci-eeig.org/Statutes.aspx

A review of the first half of 2007

- Workshop "Innovation - the role of comprehensive cancer centres" – January, Stockholm
- Workshop on Accreditation program – February, Villejuif
- Workshop on Biobanking – March, Rotterdam
- Transfog Workshop – March, Innsbruck
- Workshop "Practical training on Accreditation" – May, Genoa
- Guidelines WG Survey – assessment of training and information needs regarding guidelines development, implementation and evaluation - ongoing
- Scientific Conference – "Translational Cancer Research" and General Assembly of OECI – June, Copenhagen (a total of 9 centres have joined OECI on that occasion)
- Transfog Annual Meeting – July, Brussels

Future OECI activities

- Workshop "Late effects of cancer treatments" – November, Budapest
- Workshop – "Nurses and multidisciplinary in a comprehensive cancer centre" - December, Stockholm
- Workshop "Dialog with Patients organizations" – February, 2008
- Workshop, WG New Technology - April 2008, Brussels
- Scientific Conference «Discovering new worlds in medicine towards nanoapplication in cancer prevention and treatment» and General Assembly – May 2008, Genoa

THE 2008 OECI SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE
aims to explore coming forms of personalized medicine in which an early detection and better comprehension of the disease will define more appropriate and effective treatments of cancer.
Provisional programme :

www.oeci-eeig.org/Genova.aspx

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