

## 35 Partners Join In European Research Initiative for Alzheimer's Disease



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The European Prevention of Alzheimer's Dementia Consortium (EPAD) has announced the start of collaboration between academic and private sectors to test treatments for the prevention of Alzheimer's dementia. The EPAD project is part of a global effort in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. It is sponsored by the European Commission and the European pharmaceutical industry.

Despite significant investment, attempts to bring effective drugs for Alzheimer's disease have been disappointing to date. However, researchers now realise that Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disorder that requires early intervention. That is why the goal of this new collaboration is the prevention of dementia in people with evidence of the disease and who may have little or no clinical symptoms or complaints.

"EPAD is part of a global initiative that will make a fundamental difference to the understanding and management of Alzheimer's disease in people with very early or no symptoms at all. This could be a game-changer. It is only possible because of the absolute commitment of academics, industry, policy makers and the public to work hand in hand to defeat this global threat", said Prof Craig Ritchie, EPAD Co-coordinator and Professor of the Psychiatry of Ageing at the University of Edinburgh.

It is now easier to identify patients who are at the early stages of Alzheimer's disease and thus there is an opportunity to investigate new treatment options in clinical studies early on. At the same time, it is difficult to find study sites and large number of patients to accurately determine and confirm the therapeutic effects of the drugs being tested. That is why a joint collaboration such as this one clearly offers the advantage of identifying and referring patients so that treatment options can be tested rapidly within one same trial.

EPAD aims to develop a platform that will utilise existing information from national or regional patient cohorts and studies that have already identified potential patients. This initiative is expected to facilitate the process of drug development and drug testing. The EPAD programme has an initial budget of £64M that will be distributed across 35 partners from both the private and academic sectors.

According Jean Georges, the Executive Director of Alzheimer Europe, the prevention of the development of dementia in biomarker-positive people would be a fantastic step. He also pointed out that the novel trial concept and the EPAD's initiative will help speed up the drug discovery process.

The programme offers several advantages including the excellent pre-trial characterisation of subjects, the establishment of the highest possible quality study sites across Europe, a quicker decision-making process with respect to the success or failure of drugs as well as access to a shared placebo group.

Source: [EPAD](#)

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