
Shortening the Time from Medical Research to Treatment



Chronic diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's have seen an increase across Europe due to higher life expectancy and changes in lifestyle. In principle it is biomedical research that will lead to discoveries, which can offer new therapies and diagnostic solutions. Yet often these stay too long in the laboratory, which creates delays reaching the patients in need. This is why a new organisation has been launched which will help to bridge the "translational gap" that currently still separates the world of scientific medical research from applications in the clinic.

EATRIS, the 'European Advanced Translational Research Infrastructure in Medicine', will operate through a pan-European consortium of 60 prominent academic institutions, which includes leading biomedical translational research centres. The aim is to ensure biomedical research is translated faster, and more efficiently, into products for clinical application, like novel drugs, vaccines and diagnostics. With this cooperation it is thus hoped to turn huge progress made in the field of biomedical research, now into medical innovations with substantial benefits for patients.

Commenting on the launch, scientific director Dr Giovanni Migliaccio says; 'The inauguration of EATRIS activities comes after a lengthy preparation. We are confident that our research infrastructure will have a positive impact on the translational medicines field within the European Research Area (ERA) and will deliver significant and tangible benefits to Europe's citizens. He continues; 'This will also allow Member States to avoid infrastructure duplications, and facilitates more efficient use of the available resources in these scientifically and economically challenging times.'

Although he stresses that EATRIS is not only a service provider facilitating product development with the help of a team of specialised scientists, but it also strategically aims to improve outcomes in translational medicine, by challenging current paradigms of therapeutic and diagnostic product development. The consortium will work to ensure EATRIS becomes a 'European Research Infrastructure Consortium' (ERIC), a legal entity created specifically for setting up joint research facilities at a European level.

A key target group for EATRIS' work will be sufferers of rare diseases, as here the gap between upstream research and new drugs ready for the clinic is particularly wide and needs to be shortened. This means, more and better treatment, as well as diagnostics and preventive measures, will be made available to more patients and at a lower cost. EATRIS will be officially launched on June 3rd and 4th at the organisation's new headquarters in Amsterdam, at a conference on Translational Medicine. Topics to be discussed will include Trends and Challenges in Translational Research in Europe and Beyond as well as Europe's Needs in Translating Science into Innovative Medical Products.

For more information, please visit: EATRIS

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