



17 December 2013

Dear Colleagues,

On 5 December 2013 the MEPs Against Cancer group held a roundtable on "Key determinants of Inequalities in cancer Survival across Europe" where the latest results from EURO CARE, the widest collaborative research project comparing cancer survival by country in Europe, were presented.

EURO CARE 5 results were presented, published also in the Lancet Oncology magazine, which shown that the number of adults surviving at least 5 years after the diagnosis has increased steadily over time in all regions of Europe from 1999 to 2007 and yet cancer survival still varies widely between European countries. Despite the promising increase of childhood cancer survival in Eastern Europe, the rate in this region is still 10% to 20% lower than in Western Europe. Please find the conclusions of the study in the attached document.

High representatives from DG SANCO, DG Research and the Joint Research Centre, EURO CARE leaders, cancer registry directors and researchers from Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Croatia, Bulgaria, major EU cancer stakeholders, including ECCO, SIOP-E, ESSO, ECPC, ECL, EPHA, EONS, OEI, EPAAC, MPE, ENCR among others, and endorsed by ESO, ESTRO and ESMO sought to draw attention to the inequalities across the EU ahead of the European Elections and discuss solutions.

Given our views, we decided to support the following high priorities for the future decisions in cancer health policy:

- International studies on population-based cancer survival are vital to disclose inequalities across European countries and are based exclusively on data from population cancer registries.
- Public health research conducted on the basis of population-based disease registries shall not be impeded by the new proposal on the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Ad hoc-studies to investigate the reasons of such inequalities (e.g. access to early diagnosis and optimal treatments, organization of health care delivery).
- New studies to address emerging issues related to the management of elderly patients and of survivorship including quality of life.
- Promotion of twinning programmes i.e. pairing medical institutions in high-income countries with those in low/middle-income countries to reduce the childhood cancer survival gap in Europe.
- Follow evidence-based clinical guidelines covering the whole patient pathway to ensure good clinical cancer care: early detection diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and palliative care. Preventive strategies may also be a vital phase of cancer care.
- Organizing cancer services to ensure that all patients receive high quality cancer care, strengthening the governance of cancer care, monitoring and benchmarking performance through better data.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation, I look forward to a fruitful collaboration on the items above.

Kind regards, Alojz Peterle MEP
President of the MEPs Against Cancer
European Parliament