

A leap forward for health research in Europe: top scientists to have more say in EU-funded research agenda

New Scientific Panel for Health to be established under HORIZON 2020

Brussels, 20 November 2013

The Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe (Biomed Alliance), a consortium of 21 member organisations representing over 400 000 experts, today welcomes the EU's decision to create a Strategic Scientific Panel for Health within H2020 as a major step towards more targeted investment in health innovation in Europe. The Panel was voted in by the European Parliament in Strasbourg after lengthy negotiations on the overall H2020 proposal, which will run from 2014-2020.

MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho said *"As one of the Horizon 2020 rapporteurs, I am delighted that I played a role in ensuring that Europe's leading health and scientific experts have been granted an official role in shaping the agenda of future health research. The Scientific Panel for Health which was advocated by the Biomed Alliance ([The Alliance for Biomedical Research for Europe](#)) is a major step towards more targeted health research & innovation in Europe".* MEP Teresa Riera Madurell, added, *"Today is a good day for health research in Europe. I fully supported the call for more strategic direction for health in the research programme. And of course, the Biomed Alliance has an unavoidable role in setting up this strategic direction. I now call upon the Commission to take the necessary steps to ensure that the strongest and most effective scientific panel for health is established."*

Emphasising the need to better align health research and policy in order to avoid fragmentation, boost innovation and address unmet medical needs, Alliance members embarked on an advocacy campaign for the creation of the Scientific Panel, working with a coalition of health research and policy experts, former leading national politicians, patient advocates and leaders from the biomedical industry. Commenting on the decisions, one of the campaign members, Nobel Prize-winner Prof. Harald zur Hausen said: *"The health science community is at the heart of Europe's research progress. Political decisions that are made now will have a long-term effect on European citizens and economies; it is therefore crucial that experts with first-hand experience provide input from the onset"*.

Executive Committee:

President: Prof. U. Smith. Sweden
President-Elect: Prof. K. Sipido. Belgium
Vice President: Prof. J. Celis, Denmark

Honorary Treasurer: Prof. L. P. Nicod. Switzerland
Officer: Prof. C. O'Morain. Ireland
Officer: Prof. G. Moonen, Belgium

 BioMed Alliance

c/o EASD Office:
Rheindorfer Wea 3
40591 Düsseldorf • Germany
info@biomedeuropa.org
www.biomedeuropa.org

The Strategic Scientific Panel for Health will be tasked with a clear mission of orientating and promoting the co-ordination of health research and innovation across Horizon 2020. The role will include helping to eliminate duplication in research efforts and sharing discoveries across Europe, thereby further promoting collaboration and patient access to new innovations faster than ever before. These efforts also form part of the broader vision for H2020 which seeks to transform Europe into a science and research hub that can compete on the global stage and drive jobs and growth.

The President of the BioMed Alliance, Prof Ulf Smith commended policymakers, in particular the members of the European Parliament leading the Horizon 2020 negotiations, MEP Teresa Madurell and MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho. *“Today is a good day for research in Europe. By backing the BioMed Alliance’s call for more strategic direction into the EU research programme from the outset, Europe’s policy makers have shown their commitment to improve health research in Europe.”*

The BioMed Alliance hopes the Panel will liaise and be the interface with the Member States, industry, regulatory bodies, patients and other stakeholders under Horizon 2020. Prof. Smith added, “It is vital that the scientific community and policymakers establish permanent communication and collaboration channels in order to tackle complex societal challenges like health more efficiently than in the past”.

#####

Executive Committee:

President: Prof. U. Smith, Sweden
President-Elect: Prof. K. Sipido, Belgium
Vice President: Prof. J. Celis, Denmark

Honorary Treasurer: Prof. L. P. Nicod, Switzerland
Officer: Prof. C. O’Morain, Ireland
Officer: Prof. G. Moonen, Belgium

 BioMed Alliance

c/o EASD Office:
Rheindorfer Wea 3
40591 Düsseldorf • Germany
info@biomedeuropa.org
www.biomedeuropa.org