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EDITORIAL

Personalized PREvention of Chronic DIseases (PRECeDI): a Marie Curie RISE project

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Funded in the context of the first call of the Marie Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) 2014 of Horizon 2020, the PREvention of Chronic DIseases consortium (PRECeDI, http://www.precedi.eu/) aims to provide high-quality, multidisciplinary knowledge through training and research in personalized medicine with specific focus on the personalized prevention of chronic diseases. There is a large consensus that personalized medicine is a driver of innovation for research and health care, and also for the health care system and industry as a whole [1]. In order to harness the potential of this new concept, the "PRECeDI" consortium aims to train staff from academic and non-academic institutions on several research topics related to personalized prevention of cancer and neurodegenerative diseases. The acquisition of skills from researchers will come from dedicated secondments aimed at training on different research topics not available at the home institutions; attendance to training courses, workshops, seminars, conferences. In details, five research domains will be addresses: 1) identification and validation of biomarkers for primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases, secondary prevention of Alzheimer, and tertiary prevention of head and neck cancer; 2) economic evaluation of genomic applications; 3) ethical-legal and policy issues surrounding personalized medicine; 4) sociotechnical analysis of the pros-and cons of informing healthy individuals on their genome; 5) identification of organizational models for the provision of predictive genetic testing.

PRECeDI is embedded in existing cooperation structures, such as the Erasmus Mundus ERAWEB II program, with additional leading small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Europe and Canada as beneficiaries. The consortium consists of 9 beneficiaries, namely the Institute of Public Health, Università del Sacro Cuore, Rome, Italy; Better Value Healthcare Ltd, Oxford, United Kingdom; Department of Infectiuos Diseaseses and Hygiene, Università La Sapienza, Rome, Italy; Section Community Genetics, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands; LINKCARE Health Services S.L., Barcelona, Spain; Erasmus Universitait Medisch Centrum, Department of Epidemiology, Rotterdam,

The Netherlands; Department of Public Health, Debreceni Egyetem, Debrecen Hungary; European Public Health Association, Utrecht, The Netherlands; Myriad Genetics Srl, Milan, Italy, and 2 partners (Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, USA; Centre of Genomics and Policy Department of Human Genetics, McGill University, Montreal, Canada. Among them 7 are academic institutions and 4 non-academic, including 2 SMEs. Members are from 7 EU countries, plus the US and Canada. The project duration is 4 years (January, 1st, 2015, to December, 31st, 2018) during which around 30 staff including early stage researchers and experienced researchers will be seconded to 11 institutions. In each host institution they will be supported by a research team of leading EU scientists in personalised medicine related disciplines, and they will be involved either in the aforementioned research activities, and the attendance of specific training courses. The staff seconded will also be actively involved in seminar organizations and participations, where they will be presenting the results of their research. The internal workshops are the starting point of the knowledge return phase, when each researcher will use the competences obtained during the secondment to advance the research, and transfer the knowledge to the home organisation.

The partners and the researchers enter into a formal consortium with a well-defined management structure, based on the following components: the Project Coordinator, the Supervisory Board, headed by the Project coordinator and participated by the Task Leaders, and a Researcher Council, made up of all the researchers involved in the secondments and their tutors.

Outreach activities towards the general public will also be implemented: seminars, workshops will be organised during the project in order to disseminate to the public the project progress and the results. The workshops will aim to engage policy makers and public and private sectors to share the project results, challenges and benefits of multisectoral collaboration and to develop common future guidelines for personalised health care identifying reasons and areas for multi stakeholder collaboration.

By training staff from leading Institutions in Europe, USA and Canada on several key aspects related to the integration of personalized medicine in the field of prevention, PRECeDI will provide a cohesive framework in order to enable the seconded staff to make informed decisions that enhance public health and appropriately serve health care systems, new biotech industries and policy makers at the dawn of the post-genomic era.

We trust that PRECeDI will contribute to the newly developing field of personalized prevention and thus contribute to better health for Europe's citizens.

References

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