



Press Release: Launch of report “Realising the potential of genomic technologies in cancer care: Implementing the ‘Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All’ initiative in the EU”

Brussels, Belgium – 7th December 2021

Personalised medicine, through wide and timely access to biomarker testing, has the potential to transform cancer care. Yet, throughout the EU, uptake of genomic technologies for biomarker testing remains sub-optimal.

A working group of leading experts and stakeholders from the EU oncology community was convened to create a [report with actionable policy recommendations to address barriers to the delivery of personalised medicine](#) – and specifically to support the implementation of one flagship in Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, ‘Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All’ initiative. The recommendations call on the European Commission to:

- lead awareness campaigns on biomarker testing
- develop EU-wide guidance on personalised medicine
- build the required infrastructure
- facilitate the development of a specialised workforce
- mobilise resources to promote equal access.

The report – endorsed by the European Cancer Patient Coalition, Lung Cancer Europe and EU40 – was launched today during a virtual event co-hosted by Cyrus Engerer (Member of the European Parliament), the European Cancer Patient Coalition and the Challenge Cancer Parliamentary Intergroup. The development of the report and the organisation of the event were supported by AstraZeneca.

Antonella Cardone, Director of ECPC and member of the working group, noted that *“biomarker testing sits at the centre of personalised medicine and can support treatment choice. The report we are launching today, directly speaks to the needs of the patient community, who want to benefit more from precision cancer medicines”*.

Reinhard Büttner, Director of the Institute of Pathology at University Hospital Cologne and member of the working group, added that *“implementing biomarker testing, genomic sequencing and personalised cancer care has the potential to massively improve outcome of cancer patients across the EU”*.

“The Cancer Plan has a number of key actions that specifically address personalised medicine. Examples are the flagships Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All... this ambitious approach will help to move forwards to a better personalised approach, tailored to the characteristics of each patient and the disease”, said Stefan Schreck, Adviser for Stakeholder Relations at DG SANTE, European Commission.

“Personalised medicine is first about really partnering with the patient. And then using tools which define treatments, not only drugs but surgery and radiation oncology also”, explained Matti Aapro, President of the European Cancer Organisation.

MEP Cyrus Engerer noted that *“personalised medicine represents a promising way to improve cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment”* and stressed the need to *“co-create policies that support high-quality cancer care in the EU”*.

Overall, panelists agreed on the urgency to unleash the potential of personalised medicine to fight cancer and drive positive outcomes for cancer patients across the EU.

The European Commission has moved to implementation of Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, and in October launched calls for project grants to bring the ‘Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All’ initiative to life. The report launched today provides key principles for implementation of this initiative and can therefore be seen by those currently preparing submissions for this EU grant as a framework for success.

The report *“Realising the potential of genomic technologies in cancer care: Implementing the ‘Cancer Diagnostic and Treatment for All’ initiative in the EU”* can be accessed [here](#).