## European Health Award 2014: Six projects shortlisted

17th European Health Forum Gastein, 1 – 3 October 2014

**European Health Award 2014: Six projects shortlisted**

*Six cross-border health projects have now been short-listed for the prestigious European Health Award 2014. They cover topics such as management of psychotic disorders, TB, perinatal health, pharmacovigilance, threat preparedness and Sudden Cardiac Death Syndrome. The prize-winner will be chosen by a panel of leading health experts, and the award presented at the European Health Forum Gastein in early October.*

**Bad Hofgastein, 27 August 2014** – Six cutting-edge projects are in the running for the prestigious €10,000 European Health Award 2014, sponsored by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Health and FOPI, which brings together Austria's research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. The winner will be chosen by a panel of leading health experts, and announced during the 17th EHFG Conference, being held in the Gastein Valley from the 1st to 3rd October.

The European Health Award honours projects and initiatives aiming to improve public health or health care in Europe. Important criteria are that more than one European country should be involved in the project, it should show innovation and be sustainable, and that the results are transferable to other states and address a significant health threat that directly benefits a substantial portion of the population or relatively large patient groups.

“The point of this award is to promote intelligent and effective initiatives and encourage the development of projects that lend themselves to effective trans-national cooperation,” Prof Helmut Brand, President of the International Forum Gastein, said. “At this year’s EHFG we will be discussing how we can meet visions of a social and prosperous Europe, and the fact that we need politicians and stakeholders who will champion smart, sustainable and inclusive policies. The European Health Award contributes to this theme by rewarding and highlighting projects that are sustainable, innovative, multi-country and breaking new boundaries in their attempts to improve health in Europe.” The European Health Award, together with the European Health Forum Gastein, is aimed at encouraging such an approach. “In healthcare there is always a risk of making short-sighted cuts instead of managing overlaps and inefficiency. The shortlisted projects have identified problems of healthcare delivery or significant threats to population health, and are directly addressing issues such as efficiency, quality of care and access to care that are so important to ensure our health systems are innovative” explained Professor Brand.

The European Health Award was established in 2007 by Honorary President and EHFG founder Professor Günther Leiner. Leiner stressed that promoting transborder cooperation in health policy had been a key motivating factor behind establishing the award and seven years later the challenge has become even greater: “Today´s health challenges are compounded by factors such as demographic developments increasing the demand for health, the growing prevalence of chronic conditions and by increasing costs and scarcity of resources. Promoting a cross-border agenda in health policy, multi-country working and the development of transferable initiatives remains as important as ever,” Prof Leiner said.

Last year's award went to the Recreational Drugs European Network (ReDNet) Project, a multicentred project based in eight EU countries and aimed at identifying new psychoactive substances sold online and improving the information stream to vulnerable individuals, especially young people and professionals working with them, via a range of innovative technological tools. In 2012 the Award winner was HLS-EU – the European Health Literacy Project, that organised the multi-country European Health Literacy Survey, founded the international network ‘Health Literacy Europe’ and established national advisory boards on health literacy in eight countries to address the overall cultural, social and political impact of health literacy.

**The 2014 short-list in detail:**

**1. ITAREPS (Information Technology Aided Relapse Prevention Programme in Schizophrenia)**

<https://www.itareps.com>

The ITAREPS system (Information Technology Aided Relapse Prevention Programme in Schizophrenia) represents a mobile phone-based e-Health solution for weekly remote patient monitoring and disease management in schizophrenia and psychotic disorders in general. ITAREPS provides health professionals with home telemonitoring via a PC-to-phone SMS platform that identifies prodromal symptoms of relapse, to enable early intervention and prevent hospitalisations. The participants of the programme are patients and their family members. The programme was developed by the Prague Psychiatric Centre in 2005. Based on available evidence, ITAREPS is capable of reducing the risk of rehospitalisation down to one-fifth.

*Participating countries: Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Japan.*

**2. SALUS (Scalable, Standard based Interoperability Framework for Sustainable Pro-active Post Market Safety Studies)**

<http://www.salusproject.eu/>

The main aim of SALUS is to complement on-going medical drug safety studies through a scalable and standard based interoperability framework which specially focuses on postmarketingpharmacovigilance activities. Post-marketing pharmacovigilance can be defined as the science of detecting, assessing, understanding, and preventing adverse effects of drugs or other drug related problems once the drug is on market. The SALUS project fosters the integration of clinical care information from electronic health records (EHRs) into clinical research systems to enable proactive post-marketing safety studies for early detection of potential safety issues.

*Participating countries:  Italy and Germany and partners from Switzerland, France, Sweden, Belgium, The Netherlands and Turkey.*

**3. ExplainTB**

[explaintb.org](http://explaintb.org/)

ExplainTB is a crowd charity project that offers free educational videos in several languages at the point of care: more than 300 volunteers worldwide contributed content, translations, proof-readings, voice-overs or acted as doctors in the films. The app allows the display of movies and written information in about 28 languages. The audio-visual content also teaches populations that are out of reach for print material. ExplainTB helps the healthcare worker to overcome the language barrier, allows patients to learn about their disease in their mother tongue and provides relatives with essential information about prevention of transmission. Furthermore, ExplainTB allows governments to publish national guidelines and country-specific information on a mobile point-of-care platform. Access to all videos can be gained via an app or by scanning a QR code from a poster. The posters are available on www.explaintb.org. The website allows the creation of bi-lingual handouts with individually tailored written information. Available since November 2013, ExplainTB has registered access to its website from over 80 countries. More than 2500 regular users access the information.

*Participating countries: Not applicable, videos in 16 languages, written material in 33 languages, 12000 visitors registered from over 80 countries.*

**4. EpiSouth-plus Project**

[www.episouthnetwork.org](http://www.episouthnetwork.org/)

The EpiSouth-plus Project aimed at increasing health security in the Mediterranean Area and Balkans by enhancing preparedness to threats, which can affect health security, and to bio-security risks at national/regional levels in the framework of International Health Regulation implementation. Building upon the Network of 27 EU and non-EU Countries established by the previous project EpiSouth (2006-2010), the whole initiative has lasted more than seven years (2006-2014). The EpiSouth plus project has strengthened countries' capacity to cope with health threats through concerted and coordinated capacity building activities, including the establishment of a Mediterranean Regional Laboratories network; promotion of common procedures in interoperable Generic Preparedness and Risk management among the countries involved in the Network; enhancement of Mediterranean Early Warning Systems (EWS) allowing alerts and Epidemic Intelligence (EI) information sharing among EpiSouth countries and developing interoperability with other Early Warning Systems, including the European EWRS. Besides several trainings and workshops for epidemiologists and lab staff, among the main outcomes of the project have been guidelines for the establishment of lab networks and a tool for the development or the upgrading of National Generic Emergency Preparedness Plans (EPREP).

*Participating countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus,Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain plus 17 non-EU MS of the Mediterranean Area and South-East Europe (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, FYROM, Israel, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Palestine, Serbia, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey).*

**5. Euro-Peristat**

<http://www.europeristat.com/>

The Euro-Peristat project’s aim is to develop a high quality, innovative, internationally recognized and sustainable European perinatal health information system, producing data and analysis on a regular basis for use by stakeholders including clinicians (obstetricians, neonatologists, midwives, and neonatal nurses), policy makers in health ministries, maternal and child protection offices, and insurance and quality assurance agencies as well as pregnant women and their families. The project began as part of the EU’s Health Monitoring Programme and relies on an active network of European perinatal health professionals (clinicians, epidemiologists, and statisticians). Euro-Peristat´s data serve as evidence for key stakeholders making decisions about mothers and babies´ health in Europe. Each of their reports has been downloaded over 3000 times and in a web evaluation of 100 high-level stakeholders, 80% of respondents rated their publications very useful for their work. Over 200 news articles have been published on their results which have generated multiple debates about care provision to mothers and children.

*Twenty-nine countries currently participate in Euro-Peristat, including 26 EU member states and Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland.*

**6. EUTrigTreat**

<http://www.eutrigtreat.eu/>

Electrical heart disease leading to arrhythmias represents a major public health issue because it increases the risk for sudden cardiac death (SCD). Current SCD prevention strategies are not directed at the underlying risk mechanisms. The EUTrigTreat project elucidates molecular and environmental mechanisms, which underlie life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias, and how genes and external factors modulate and initiate catastrophic electrical abnormalities in the heart. Improved understanding of key arrhythmia mechanisms enables EUTrigTreat investigators to develop mechanism-targeted diagnostic and therapeutic approaches including novel drug and device therapies. These important objectives are investigated by a multidisciplinary research team including clinical and basic scientists together with small-to-medium enterprises, and through a coordinated large-scale collaborative excellence project.

*Participating countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Switzerland, U.K. and USA*

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