



Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe

IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL FOR HEALTH RESEARCH (EUCHR): THE SCIENTIFIC STEERING BOARD

The Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe (BioMed Alliance) has been long advocating for a **strategic instrument – the ‘European Council for Health Research (EuCHR)’ – to foster innovation in Europe** by using contemporary evidence to bridge the gap between health research and policy for the benefit of society.

A scientific-led strategic body that can steer health research and innovation across Horizon 2020 (H2020) lies at the core of the EuCHR concept. Indeed, **to implement the concept of the EuCHR it would be necessary to establish a Scientific Steering Board (SSB).**

The BioMed Alliance thus welcomes the recent call by the European Parliament for the establishment of a *Strategic Scientific Panel for Health* for the strategic coordination of health research and innovation across Horizon 2020. It represents an important step for the advancement of the health research agenda in Europe, which the BioMed Alliance would like to build on.

In this document, **the BioMed Alliance wishes to present its vision on the implementation and governance of the EuCHR’s Scientific Steering Board (SSB).** In particular, it wishes to highlight the elements which would distinguish the SSB from the existing Health Advisory Board in FP7, namely:

- » the right of initiative to set scientific direction and priorities
- » independence and the right to carry out broad consultations to enrich its reflections
- » closer collaboration with the Programme Committee
- » “Forward-looking” in its approach.

Executive Committee:

President:	Prof. U. Smith, Sweden	Colm O’ Morain
Vice President:	Prof. K. Sipido, Belgium	Gustave Moonen
Vice President:	Prof. J. Celis, Denmark	Treasurer: Prof. L. Nicod, Switzerland



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OBJECTIVE

The SSB will set the long-term coordination and strategic planning of health research across H2020 and will promote the translation of findings into innovative outcomes that will improve the health of European citizens.

It will achieve these objectives thanks to the guidance provided by the best scientific leadership, which will provide expert scientific input on policy from the outset and will be setting scientific direction and priorities and defining the research agendas related to health in H2020.

POWERS

The governance structure will assign to the SSB:

- » The right and the obligation of initiative: it will make public and communicate its reports for consideration and approval to the Programme Committee and to the European Commission.
- » The right and obligation of establishing a coherent, transparent and reliable mechanism for consultation and for providing an organised forum for dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, at national and EU levels, including patients' organisations and industry
- » The SSB will not be involved in the evaluation of individual projects or the funding of specific organisations.

STRUCTURE

The SSB will be a body of top-level scientists with competency in the area of health and biomedical research.

The SSB will operate at EU level, within the framework of the EU Institutions already in place. It will:

- » assume its role under the current legal principle of final approval of programmatic research by the Member States' representation in the Programme Committee
- » work closely with the European Commission across all Commission Directorates
- » seek input from Member States right from the outset through the Programme Committee
- » interact with two new bodies, the Stakeholders and the Funders Platforms.

SSB members will be appointed by a high-level Nomination Committee set by the European Commission. The SSB membership should provide a balanced involvement of various disciplines and diseases. SSB members should participate on their own capacity and not represent single organisations.



Fig.1. EuCHR: Accelerating Europe's Health Research and Innovation through Strategic, Scientific-Led Actions

The SSB will interact with the following bodies (Fig.1):

» EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission is a key partner and will implement the strategy set by the SSB through the annual work programmes. It will prepare calls, perform the evaluation process and implement funding. It will also participate in the communication strategy.

» PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The SSB will seek a much greater involvement of the Member States through the Programme Committee during the preparation and approval of the annual work programmes.

» STAKEHOLDERS PLATFORM

The Stakeholders Platform will have a broad representation of all stakeholders in the health research continuum, patients included. Structure and networking mechanisms will need to be defined in order to optimize the consultation process and the impact of their input.

» FUNDERS FORUM

The Funders Forum will include Member States, Charities and other relevant parties. It will look at how funds could be combined and complemented with EU contributions to promote synergies on specific purposes (along the lines of the Joint Action 'European Partnership for Action Against Cancer' WP8: co-ordination of research). There is a need for a better understanding of what other funders are



doing, what their priorities are, and what instruments they have to implement cross-border collaborations.

The SSB will provide trusted top-level scientific steering of R&D funding, and a well-established tradition of independent and sensible evaluation procedures, to attract national agencies and private sources into sharing their resources for the sake of higher ambitions.

ACTIVITIES

» SCIENTIFIC STRATEGY

The SSB will define and decide on the overall scientific strategy for health and biomedical research within H2020, including:

- annual work programmes
- calls for proposals

To do so it will consult and work in close collaboration with the European Commission, the Programme Committee and the Stakeholders Platform.

» MONITOR QUALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION, PERFORMANCE AND FOLLOW-UP

The SSB will:

- supervise the implementation of the annual work programmes by monitoring the quality of the implementation and selection process
- monitor the outcome and follow-up with the support of a unit that develops criteria for monitoring
- implement an analysis of the long-term outcomes of research funding to help plan future activities

» INTERACTION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The SSB will consult and engage in discussions with all relevant stakeholders in health research. It will identify synergies with other policy initiatives in order to improve coordination and will provide scientific advice for any measures needed to ensure the progress of health research in Europe. Moreover, collaboration will be encouraged with other non-health related disciplines to deepen cross-talk and innovation across the health research spectrum.

» COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The SSB will provide an open information strategy to communicate with all stakeholders - including civic society at large - concerning activities, achievements and key barriers as identified during its work.