

New European Project Squares Off Against Paediatric Cancer

The Austrian-managed iPC project is now underway and bringing hope to children with cancer

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VILLACH, AUSTRIA—Cancer in children is rare but when it happens, clinician prescribed treatment options are not always as clear as one would hope. In fact, on average, only a quarter of oncology patients respond to the drug therapy they receive. There are many reasons for this but evidence shows that a personalized treatment plan or treatment that is based on the *patient's* fundamental biology could significantly enhance treatment outcomes. As it turns out, the personalized treatment plan can be as complex as the cancer itself but there is hope.

Under the technical leadership of Dr. Maria Rodriguez Martinez from IBM in Switzerland and the coordination of the Austrian-based private research company Technikon, consortium scientists have recently kicked off a European Commission funded research project entitled iPC (Individualized Paediatric Cure). In this € 15 million, four-year endeavor, 21 partners from eleven different countries, including nine European Union Member States (Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands, Slovenia), along with the USA and Australia will work together with the goal of giving clinicians the tools and knowledge to create individualized treatment plans to their patients, namely children with cancer.

The goal of the iPC project is to collect, standardize and harmonize existing clinical knowledge and medical data and, with the help of artificial intelligence, create treatment models for patients. Armed with these treatment models, scientists will then test them on virtual patients to evaluate treatment efficacy and toxicity, thus improving both patient survival and their quality of life.

While the ever-present complexities of cancer continue to challenge our scientific community, it is reassuring that European projects like iPC are using the latest technology and brightest minds to find solutions which, in turn, usher in better patient care.

This project is being managed by Technikon. From their offices in Villach, Austria, they coordinate all aspects to ensure that the project is efficient and on time throughout the four-year span. Technikon will oversee the data management, perform administrative tasks and establish, maintain and handle the communication and dissemination.

About Technikon:

Technikon is a private research service company in Austria which manages multinational teams in the organization, execution and assessment of research projects. Technikon is Europe's leading private company coordinating and disseminating technology-based cooperative European research projects.

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