

## **Patients and cancer experts launch a joint vision for improving cancer outcomes in Europe**

A coalition of 60 patient advocates, healthcare professionals and scientists (including 3 Nobel Prize winners) from 20 European countries have come together to publish a blueprint for improving cancer outcomes and achieving better quality of life for cancer survivors throughout Europe.<sup>1</sup> They are members of the European Cancer Concord (ECC ®), an equal partnership between patients and cancer experts which launched the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights on World Cancer Day 2014 in the European Parliament in Strasbourg. The publication, in the open access journal ESMO Open, has an ambitious aim - to increase the long term survival of European citizens with cancer to 70% by 2035. This 70:35 Vision emphasises the need for European countries to share best practice for the benefit of patients. The challenge is to ensure that this Vision is achieved in all European countries; this will require investment at national and at European levels, as was envisaged by European Health Ministers through the Vilnius Declaration, in order to ensure that all countries, not just the wealthy ones, achieve the 70:35 Vision, even in this time of economic austerity.

*"We believe that our Vision 70:35 can deliver real benefit for patients, if we work together in a collaborative way, said Prof Peter Selby, University of Leeds and President of ECC. "The document is the product of the work of a large group of collaborators and ECC is partnering with many pan European Organisations including the European Cancer Organisation (ECCO), the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC), the European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO), the European Organisation for the Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) the European Society of Surgical Oncology (ESSO) and the European Cancer Leagues (ECL), in order to achieve this ambitious target".*

Sharing best practice and implementing these findings across Europe will underpin improvements in cancer control and cancer care. However, in order to achieve the 70:35 Vision, it is also essential to increase the intensity of research and innovation in Europe and facilitate the rapid translation of discovery science into clinical practice

*"Vision 70:35 emphasises the scale of our ambition", said first author of the paper Prof Mark Lawler, Queen's University Belfast and Vice President ECC. "We believe that this target is achievable, provided we share best practice and promote innovation and research across European nations and regions. We need to compete, not against each other, but against our common enemy - Cancer".*

A key component of the vision is the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders, with cancer patients and their carers working together with a wide range of healthcare and life science professionals, from primary care experts to molecular scientists, all focussed on a common goal, improved outcomes and better quality of life for European citizens

*"We are delighted to be publishing this initiative that has the potential to benefit so many patients in Europe," said Prof Ian Banks, Vice-President of ECC, Chair of the Patient Advocacy Committee ECCO and President of the European Men's Health Forum (EMHF). "Involving all stakeholders, including primary care professionals, can significantly improve our chances of success."*

**Notes** The European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights was delivered under the stewardship of the Society for Translational Oncology (STO) who we gratefully acknowledge for their guidance and support

<sup>1</sup>Lawler M, Banks I, Law K, et al. The European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights, update and implementation 2016. ESMO Open 2016;1:e000127. doi:10.1136/esmoopen-2016-000127