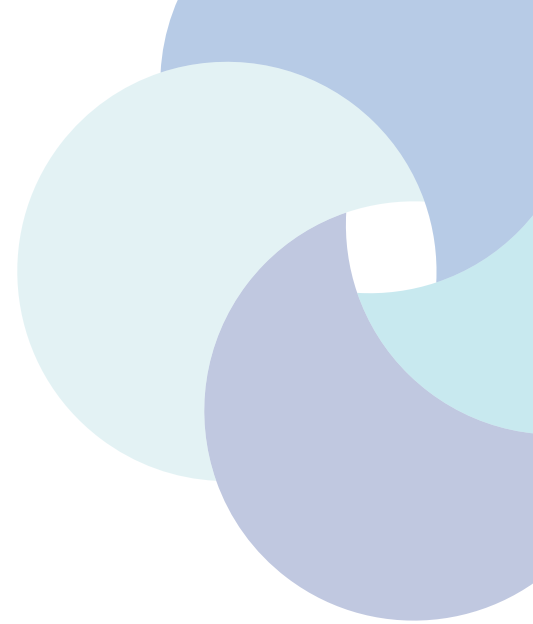




INTERACT EUROPE



INTERACT-EUROPE's blueprint for high functioning multidisciplinary cancer care in every country

A summary for policy-makers, cancer centres, oncology educationalists and others



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1

Coordinating a European approach to inter-specialty cancer training

- As in the initial phases of creating an inter-specialty cancer training curriculum, so too in the further implementation phases, **the operation of inclusive, transparent and consultative mechanisms of working** will be vital to achieving and maintaining strong levels of oncology community support for the inter-specialty cancer training programme. It will also bring forward high value-adding inputs on an ongoing basis to continuously strengthen the programme.
- In the case of pioneering any new international initiative of the scale of the EU's inter-specialty cancer training goal, **high functioning feedback loops will be crucial to ensuring rapid learning of implementation lessons**. This includes region or country specific factors pertinent to successful deployment of the programme e.g. ensuring awareness with existing education and training procedures to synergise with rather duplicate.
- The next phase of the programme (INTERACT-EUROPE 100) will see a major onus on full implementation, which will include co-design and delivery of programme elements such as an online learning environment hosting core learning materials associated to the programme. **Governance mechanisms must ensure that the relevant professional and scientific societies, and patient representatives, maintain a core role in strategic decision making**. The hand-in-hand alignment and partnership working established in the INTERACT-EUROPE programme between professional societies and educational organisations should be maintained and enhanced. Close collaboration will be required in the strategic decision-making ahead, and according to principles such as ensuring the education delivered by the programme is contemporary, the methods chosen are feasible and meaningful, learning outcomes are clear and practical, and forms of assessment, certification and quality assurance appropriate and practical. **Throughout the implementation phase all involved parties should have the needs of end users (professionals) and the ultimate intended beneficiaries (patients) of the programme firmly in mind.**
- **As the programme develops, new stakeholders will be important to engage in implementation processes and decision-making**. These include health authorities, governments and professional specialities less engaged so far within the INTERACT-EUROPE project, such as radiology and medical oncology.

2

Developing and delivering an inter-specialty cancer training curriculum

- In the INTERACT-EUROPE project, in accordance with the original EU4Health funding call, the inter-specialty cancer training programme curriculum was constructed with the development process guided towards answering the question: *“What is it valuable for trainees to learn in order to work more effectively with different specialties and professions to deliver better care and to provide psychosocial and nutritional support for cancer patients?”*. The ethos reflected in that question should be retained during the further phases of implementation and understood by all partner i.e. the programme is **not** attempting to cover all the oncology curricula in all of the specialties.
- **Experts from European professional specialty societies were important contributors to the INTERACT-EUROPE project.** Their knowledge and insights, experience and vision, helped to guide and ground the project at every stage. This expertise must be valued and retained in the future stages of INTERACT implementation.
- In a project involving so many different countries, different professions and different fields of expertise, achieving a common and **shared language and terminology is vital.** Without clearly agreed definitions, terms such as ‘curriculum’, ‘mentor’ and ‘certification’ are highly liable to be interpreted and understood differently. **Future implementation activities are strongly advised to obtain and secure clear shared definitions at the earliest opportunities.**
- As the inter-specialty curriculum moves towards further implementation, it is recommended that its expression remains grounded in **the CanMEDS format**, an internationally recognised educational framework for medical professions which was also adapted in this project to help support education and training needs of the cancer nursing profession.
- The value of the inputs provided to the INTERACT-EUROPE project by patient representatives is highly appreciated and regarded by all project partners. **Important for future stages of programme implementation is the involvement of patients in development of the online learning materials**, with the European Patients Academy (EUPATI.eu) and the WECAN Academy highlighted as two potentially important partner organisations.
- **The curriculum should be reviewed after 5 years** (i.e. in 2027), and the next implementation project, INTERACT-EUROPE 100, is advised to develop the procedures for this to take place.

1 <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/eu4h-2021-pj-02>

- Project partners consider the curriculum and learning approach developed by INTERACT-EUROPE can bring value and support to oncology teams outside the European Union. It is suggested open dialogue be maintained with professional societies at national and international levels for this purpose. **The INTERACT-EUROPE inter-specialty cancer training programme has the potential to contribute to the improvement of cancer care and outcomes at both European and global levels.** However, project partners also understand that primary focus in the years ahead must remain on proving implementation benefit within the EU.
- The next project developing and implementing the INTERACT-EUROPE inter-specialty cancer training programme must give thoughts to the permanent structures required to sustain the programme in the long-term, including prospective revenue models that could permit the programme to be financially independent. **A clear sustainability model should be outlined by the end of the INTERACT-EUROPE 100 project.**



3

Deploying inter-specialty cancer training in cancer centres

- **Cancer centres are vital partners in delivering the inter-specialty cancer training programme, and should be acknowledged as such within the structures and approaches of the next phases of delivery of the inter-specialty cancer training programme.** This should include early and regular engagement and (two-way) communication, and appropriate integration of cancer centre representation within the governance model. Programme delivery will be compromised if every effort is not made to ensure cancer centre needs are fully met.
- **Clear needs of cancer centres identified via the INTERACT-EUROPE programme include providing centres with precise information on requirements related to their participation.** This includes: time required of trainees, trainers and mentors; and, the nature of any rotation elements of the training programme to be conducted within the centre.
- **Tailoring of approach and message will be an important ongoing requirement in recruitment strategies for the programme.** In order to achieve strong levels of centre and trainee recruitment will involve clear communication of the benefit of participation and the requirements of participation. This can be supported by working with partners to build communication and recruitment strategies that are built upon good understanding of national specificities (e.g. training schemes and norms already in place in particular countries) as well as professional specificities (e.g. particular unmet education and training needs for certain professions that the inter-specialty cancer training programme can help to meet). In summary, the key benefits of the programme may differ according to profession or country. Recruitment and participation strategy for the programme may need to be adaptable to these. It is recommended this be investigated further as part of the INTERACT-EUROPE 100 recruitment strategy.
- **A selection committee, or similar procedure, should be developed** for INTERACT-EUROPE 100, to validate the appropriateness of applicants against the criteria.
- **Every supporting project partner of INTERACT-EUROPE 100 should understand they have an active role to play in promotion of inter-specialty cancer training programme.** This includes providing promotion opportunity at relevant Congresses and pan-European events, and supporting dissemination of publicising material within their networks.
- The inter-specialty cancer training model has already attracted spontaneous interest from cancer centres outside of the European Union, including in low- and middle-income countries. **Project partners consider it correct that implementation models for the programme be developed in such a way as to give possibility for countries outside of the EU to benefit from access to the inter-specialty cancer training,** in a manner that accords with EU project financing rules.

4

Enhancing inter-specialty cancer training through technology-enhanced learning

- According to survey-based research conducted by the project, **prospective trainees are generally positive about the role of technology enhanced learning** to improve the quality and convenience of training opportunities.
- According to review of the inter-specialty cancer training curriculum, based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, **domain-specific and context-orientated educational software can support the deployment of the programme.** Domain-specific educational tools can include augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and extended reality (XR).
- **A blended learning approach is suggested, combining the advantages of distance (synchronous and asynchronous) with face-to-face instruction.** Formats of delivery of instruction depend on complexity of learning objectives as well as on training preferences (e.g. synchronous/asynchronous learning).
- **For training evaluation,** performance-based and formative evaluations, rather than just self-reported summative evaluations, are recommended.
- Survey activity conducted during the project revealed current limits in the experience of both trainees and trainers in aspects of technology enhanced education, including advanced educational technology such as digital educational games and simulations. **In order to enhance the learning and instruction process, digital competencies of trainers and trainees should be considered as prior conditions for meaningful digital oncology training.**
- A priority need in the INTERACT-EUROPE 100 project will be achieving clear understanding between all relevant partners on intended approaches towards achieving trainee learning for different aspects of the curriculum i.e. which aspects will be self-study, which will be social learning, case-based learning and collaborative learning. **Educational models, group compositions, and teaching/learning strategies are important to foresee their impacts on the teaching-learning process.**
- **Organisational models underpinning the future inter-specialty cancer training programme also require further clarification to support the identification and implementation of technology to the programme delivery** e.g. the role of tutors/teachers in supporting learners during online learning sessions.

- **As part of the INTERACT-EUROPE project, Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) and Machine Translation (MT) technology were tested for their viability as a means to improve accessibility of the inter-specialty cancer training programme to trainees who may not be fully fluent in English.** Current limitations in the approaches were observed, as well as opportunities for achieving improvements. It was known from outset that much teaching of software would be required in respect to oncology specific terminologies.
- **Availability of parallel texts is a crucial need for developing translation quality for any language, but is a special consideration for languages with smaller speaker populations e.g. Slovenian.** Other factors impacting translation quality include audio quality. Additional testing and development of translation technology will take place as part of INTERACT-EUROPE 100, building explicitly on models developed during the INTERACT-EUROPE project.

About INTERACT-EUROPE

INTERACT-EUROPE is an 18-month project (June 2022 – November 2023) co-funded by the EU under the EU4Health programme 2021–2027 as part of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. INTERACT-EUROPE brings together 33 partners from 17 countries aiming at developing a European inter-specialty cancer training programme involving all main oncology disciplines and professions, cancer centres and patient groups, based on relevant needs assessments.

For more information visit:

interact-europe.org

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