

JANE: EU Joint Action to fight cancer



Cancer continues to be a global challenge for scientists and its increasing prevalence, especially in Europe where the population is aging, requires coordinated actions to stop its upward trend. Today, cancer is an important cause of morbidity and, according to data, in more than half of the countries of the European Union deaths from cancer exceed those from cardiovascular diseases.

Within the borders of the European Union, however, disparities have been observed in the treatment of the disease and the care of patients, and this is the reason why survival rates differ. For example mortality from many cancers is higher in Eastern Europe compared to the European average. The causes are many and include, among others, the lack of reliable up-to-date patient information, heterogeneity in screening services, unequal access to treatments, insufficient organization and economic difficulties of each country. Currently, there is no single and holistic approach to cancer, in terms of prevention, early diagnosis, treatment and survival at the European level.

The JANE project (EU Joint Action in Networks of Expertise on Cancer, EU4Health Project 101075328, <https://jane-project.eu/>) is part of the efforts made to establish a unified health policy against cancer. It started in October 2022 with the participation of 16 European countries and is coordinated by the Fondazione IRCCS, Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori di Milano. The project comes to meet the above mentioned challenges by aiming to establish seven new networks of expertise (NoEs) related to cancer, in the following areas: personalized primary prevention, survivorship, palliative care, omics, high-tech medical resources, complex & poor prognosis cancer, and adolescent & young adult with cancer. In this context, experts are invited to advise, find solutions and coordinate activities so that cancer patients in the European Union have access to the same services during and after treatment, while these services will be keeping pace with recent developments in medicine and technology. NoEs will promote collaboration and knowledge

sharing between participating EU member states, lead to the development of guidelines and best practices, facilitate research and innovation, enhance education and training and ultimately improve health policy at national and European level in all sectors. Particular emphasis is placed on the integration of new technologies in all EU healthcare systems in order to improve clinical practices for the benefit of patients, based on new developments in precision medicine and the design of personalized treatments.

Building on JANE's experience and achievements so far, a follow-up proposal (JANE2) has just been submitted to continue and integrate all current JANE activities. The proposal, coordinated also by the Fondazione IRCCS, is expected to begin in October 2024 and it will be implemented by an enlarged consortium including 121 partners from 29 countries all over Europe within four years.

Cancer has no geographical and social boundaries. Thus, all JANE partners work to expand and share the knowledge of the scientific community on cancer, bring together experts from different disciplines, agencies and organizations, provide solutions for each Member State, taking into account the unique characteristics of their health care systems, in order to eliminate inequalities in the provision of oncology care in Europe. In this way, patients will be adequately supported with the ultimate goal of reducing mortality, increasing survival and improving their quality of life.