



Promoting the Use of Guidelines to Reduce Cancer Inequalities in Europe: The EUnetCCC Joint Action Initiative

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AIM

We established a **Guidelines Exchange Programme** to promote structured knowledge-sharing and peer learning on guideline implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Background

90%

of patients to receive high-quality care across Europe, with access to Comprehensive Cancer Centres (CCCs) by 2030: the target of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

Reducing cancer inequalities is a core objective, and effective guideline implementation and systematic follow-up are essential to address disparities and improve quality in cancer care. EUnetCCC, supported by the European Commission, is tasked with addressing the use of guidelines across the EU.

Baseline: EUnetCCC guidelines mapping (2025)

Guidelines are widely used, but practice varies considerably:

Governance

National authorities lead in some countries; medical societies, often voluntarily, in others.

Adherence monitoring

Rarely measured systematically: gap between guideline development and the measurement of real-world implementation and impact.

Patient involvement

Inconsistent across Europe; patient-friendly guideline versions are uncommon.

Main barriers

Access to diagnostics, imaging and innovative drugs; workforce shortages; language; funding.

Methods

- 1 In **March 2026**, a call for host and visiting institutions invited CCCs and aspiring CCCs to participate in **one-day exchange visits**.
- 2 Focus areas:
 - Guidelines implementation
 - Barriers to adherence
 - Patient involvement
 - Inter-centre collaboration
 - Quality indicators (QIs)
- 3 Preparatory work reviewed SOPs from major societies (**ESMO, ESTRO, ESGO, NCCN**), identifying gaps in evaluating real-world guideline use.
- 4 A core set of **pan-tumour QIs** was developed to assess implementation outcomes.
- 5 Engagement with medical societies and patient organisations is ongoing to co-develop a **common framework**.

Results

BY APRIL 2026

12

CCCs and aspiring CCCs joined the programme

9

European countries represented

Key opportunities identified

- Sharing of expertise in guideline implementation and QIs
- Structured discussions on monitoring and continuous improvement
- Exchanging challenges and practical solutions
- Strengthening professional networks
- Contributing to joint follow-up activities

This initiative reinforces focus on implementing existing clinical guidelines, with emphasis on measuring adherence and patient care outcomes.

Conclusions

Through knowledge exchange, stakeholder engagement and QIs development, this initiative promotes harmonized guideline implementation across diverse health systems.

Further activities starting in September 2026 will help operationalise these efforts and inform scalable strategies to improve quality of care and reduce inequalities across Europe.

Timeline

- Mar 2026** Call for host and visiting institutions
- Apr 2026** 12 centres from 9 countries joined
- Sep 2026** Further activities start
- Oct 2026** **1st exchange meeting at:** Masaryk Memorial Cancer Institute, Brno
- Nov 2026** **2nd exchange meeting at:** University Cancer Center Hamburg

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