# Societies' Profiles

AISBL / IVZW - International Non-Profit Association under Belgian law

**The European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC)**

The EORTC is a unique organisation – a vibrant example of the fact that science and research know no national boundaries. It was established in 1962 in Belgium under the title 'Groupe Européen de Chimiothérapie Anticancéreuse' and became the EORTC in 1968. It is a non-profit research organisation operating as an international association under Belgian law.

The EORTC was an initiative and an organisation that was ahead of its time – a pioneer in promoting multi-disciplinary cancer research and worldwide collaboration. The fundamental aim – to set up a clinical research organisation in Europe that would promote and coordinate high-quality clinical trials and provide a base of scientific expertise and administrative support for a network of scientists and clinical investigators – remains the same today.

However, now there is a big difference of scale; the EORTC currently links a network of more than 2,500 pre-clinical scientists and oncologists from 32 countries. It encompasses all aspects of cancer research, from translational research and new drug development to large phase III clinical trials and meta-analyses. Around 35 protocols are permanently open to recruitment and every year about 6,500 new patients – over 85% within the EU – are treated in EORTC trials. As an international organisation, the EORTC is uniquely placed to organise multi-nation, multi-centre studies and its clinical research is accomplished mainly through large, prospective, randomised trials.

The ultimate goal of the EORTC is to improve the standard of cancer treatment in Europe by developing new agents and innovative approaches, and to test more effective treatment strategies using commercially available drugs, or surgery and radiotherapy. Specifically set up imaging, biobanking and translational research initiatives provide to EORTC newly revised scientific agenda the means to new approaches for clinical trials designs, aimed at the discovery and validation of molecular determinants predictive of activity or toxicity whether tumor or host related. This means that it is one of Europe's leading players in facilitating the passage of experimental discoveries into state-of-the-art treatment, minimising the time between a potential treatment leaving the laboratory and getting to the patient.

The EORTC's independence is ensured through a number of peer-review committees that safeguard the quality of the organisation's work by monitoring the relevance and scientific value of its research.

Alongside its own scientific and clinical programme, the EORTC collaborates with a number of international regulatory bodies such as the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA) and research institutions, including the US National Cancer Institute (NCI) and many other national and international research groups worldwide.

The EORTC website is: http://www.eortc. eu/

## The National Cancer Institute (NCI)

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is one of 11 agencies that compose the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The NCI, established under the National Cancer Institute Act of 1937, is the Federal Government's principal agency for cancer research and training. The National Cancer Act of 1971 broadened the scope and responsibilities of the NCI and created the National Cancer Program. Over the years, legislative amendments have maintained the NCI authorities and responsibilities and added new information dissemination mandates as well as a requirement to assess the incorporation of state-of-the-art cancer treatments into clinical practice.

The National Cancer Institute coordinates the National Cancer Program, which conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients. Specifically, the Institute:

- Supports and coordinates research projects conducted by universities, hospitals, research foundations, and businesses throughout the U.S. and abroad through research grants and cooperative agreements.
- Conducts research in its own laboratories and clinics.
- Supports education and training in fundamental sciences and clinical disciplines for participation in basic and clinical research programs and treatment programs relating to cancer through career awards, training grants, and fellowships.
- Supports research projects in cancer control.
- Supports a national network of cancer centers.
- Collaborates with voluntary organizations and other national and foreign institutions engaged in cancer research and training activities.
- Encourages and coordinates cancer research by industrial concerns where such concerns evidence a particular capability for programmatic research.
- Collects and disseminates information on cancer.
- Supports construction of laboratories, clinics, and related facilities necessary for cancer research through the award of construction grants.

## The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)

The mission of the American Association for Cancer Research is to prevent and cure cancer. Founded in 1907, the AACR is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research. The membership includes 32,000 basic, translational and clinical researchers; health care professionals; and cancer survivors and advocates in the United States and more than 90 other countries.

The AACR marshals the full spectrum of expertise from the cancer community to accelerate progress in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer through high-quality scientific and educational programs. It funds innovative, meritorious research grants, research fellowship and career development awards. The AACR Annual Meeting attracts more than 18,000 participants who share the latest discoveries and developments in the field. Special focused conferences throughout the year present novel data across a wide variety of topics in cancer research, treatment and prevention.

The AACR publishes six major peer-reviewed journals: *Cancer Research; Clinical Cancer Research; Molecular Cancer Therapeutics; Molecular Cancer Research; Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*; and *Cancer Prevention Research*. The AACR also publishes *CR*, a magazine for cancer survivors and their families, patient advocates, physicians and scientists. *CR* provides a forum for sharing essential, evidence-based information and perspectives on progress in cancer research, survivorship and advocacy.