



Success Stories



Researchers' Success Stories / April 2011

Creating evidence for fighting healthcare associated infections

Under the lead of the university hospital Geneva, PROHIBIT unites European medical research centres and the WHO to understand crucial factors determining the frequency of healthcare associated infections. Many more hospitals contribute to the study by providing information and testing interventions to minimise healthcare associated infections.

A research subject with compelling/imperative European dimension

That the aims of PROHIBIT can only be tackled involving partners from different European countries is inherent to the subject. "The extended network as well as technical know-how of each project partner is invaluable for PROHIBIT", says Dr. Walter Zingg, who coordinates the project together with Prof. Didier Pittet. The collection of information on guidelines and practices applied by hospitals in different countries in the fight against healthcare associated diseases forms a central aspect of PROHIBIT and local partners are much better able to collaborate



with hospitals in their region. Another major project goal is the evaluation of two interventions for the prevention of a specific healthcare associated infection. As the hospitals performing the trial are not involved in the conceptual aspects of the project, involving them as consortium partners would not be sensible and lead to

"As coordinators, we have a lot of influence on the direction of the research. Having known the partners beforehand facilitates coordination as we had a rather clear idea on where our guidance would be most needed from the start".

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The rather high frequency of healthcare associated infections is posing a major health risk to European patients and creates considerable healthcare costs. There are huge differences in the frequency of healthcare related infections across European countries and healthcare institutions that cannot be explained solely by differences in characteristics of the treated patients. Rather, differences are suspected to be also caused by differences in healthcare procedures and underlying guidelines and best practices. The main aims of PROHIBIT is to identify and validate factors that determine the implementation of effective interventions to prevent healthcare associated infections.

unjustified administrative burdens for all involved. Nearly a forth of the budget of PROHIBIT is allocated to subcontracting these centres.

Lengthy, but successive negotiations
Subcontracting in R&D projects is generally not viewed favourably by the EC and is subject to very specific conditions. Walter Zingg states that the PROHIBIT consortium was very lucky with the EC project officer who understood that subcontracting the trial-performing hospitals was the best solution. Yet other offices of the EC had to be convinced before the grant agreement could be signed. Support by the Euresearch regional office Geneva was much appreciated during this negotiation phase and finally, subcontracting was accepted. Walter Zingg advised: "It is important that you explain as early as in the proposal that the organisations planned to subcontract are not carrying out essential parts of the actual research and that you describe how they will be chosen".

FACTS AND FIGURES

Project Name:	PROHIBIT - Prevention of Hospital Infections by Intervention and Training
Research Area:	Health
Coordinator:	Prof. Didier Pittet & Dr. Walter Zingg (joint coordination approved by EC)
Organisation:	Université de Genève
Start Date - End Date:	2010/01/01 - 2013/12/31
Duration:	48 months
Number of Partners:	8
Project Cost / Funding:	3.86 million Euros / 3.00 million Euros
Contract type:	Small or medium-scale focused research project
FP7 Reference Number:	241928

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