



EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER WORKSHOP: PARTNERSHIPS FOR POLICY ACTION

22-24 MAY 2019, BELFAST AND DUBLIN

hosted by Cancer Focus Northern Ireland and Irish Cancer Society

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Background

The European Code Against Cancer (ECAC) is an initiative of the European Commission to inform people about actions they can take for themselves or their families to reduce their risk of cancer. ECAC is comprised of 12 evidence-based recommendations, which the public can understand and follow without any special skills or advice.

Since 2015, the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) has received core funding from the European Commission to support the dissemination of the latest version of the ECAC by encouraging the close cooperation of cancer leagues at the national and regional levels. One of the key activities to facilitate this cooperation has been the organisation of specialist workshops dedicated to the ECAC. These workshops aimed to connect peers to share experiences of communicating ECAC, identifying common barriers and discuss possible solutions to improve the dissemination of the ECAC.

Following the evaluation of the several successful workshops that were held between 2015-2018, the focus of the workshops for the next working period (2019-2021) will shift from discussing the communication of the ECAC towards using the European Code against Cancer as a tool for policy development. In this spirit, the aim of the workshops will be to act upon the footnote of the current edition of the European Code against Cancer: “The European Code Against Cancer focuses on actions that individual citizens can take to help prevent cancer. Successful cancer prevention requires these individual actions to be supported by governmental policies and actions.”

Objective

The primary objective of the workshop will be to kickstart the cooperation amongst cancer leagues in advocating for the governmental policies and actions needed to support the European Code against Cancer.

This workshop will open the discussion, amongst cancer leagues and invited partner organisations, about the policy dimension of the ECAC, building towards the agreement of regular position papers and policy statements endorsed by cancer leagues. As a guiding theme, the workshop will have a special focus on partnerships required to achieve policy goals supporting the messages of the European Code against Cancer.

To inspire cancer leagues across Europe, the workshop will draw on examples of national and local experiences from the two host cancer leagues: Cancer Focus Northern Ireland and the Irish Cancer Society. These examples will focus on several specific areas of the ECAC: sun and UV safety; HPV vaccination; and alcohol consumption, in addition to discussing the critical role National cancer Control Plans can play in developing cancer prevention policy.

Taking place during 22 – 24 May in both Belfast (22-23 May) and Dublin (24 May) this workshop represents a great opportunity to learn about the long-standing work to build on the ECAC to achieve ambitious public health objectives and share experiences with colleagues from other cancer leagues.



Wednesday 22 May 2019

UPDATE OF ECAC ACTIONS, POLICY FRAMEWORK AND CANCER PREVENTION EUROPE

Speakers: David Ritchie – ECL

Joachim Schüz – IARC

This session will provide an update on ECL actions since December 2018 related to the European Code against Cancer, focusing on the results of the ECAC evaluation performed with cancer leagues.

The outcomes of the evaluation will be used to open the discussion of the ECAC policy framework, which will outline the potential supportive policies and governmental actions for the implementation of the ECAC. Following the discussion of concept and draft framework, during the workshop, cancer leagues will be consulted to develop a final version for publication on the ECL website.

An update of recent activities by Cancer Prevention Europe will be provided highlighting the way in which cancer leagues can be involved and support the workplan of Cancer Prevention Europe. A special mention will be made of the ‘Cancer Mission’ for Europe, which is a new initiative to be funded by the European Union during the period of the next EU budget.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- What are the current priorities for cancer league / organisation regarding cancer prevention policy?
- What would be an appropriate format by which to communicate a policy framework for the ECAC messages? Should this also be communicated to the individual, or targeted at decision-makers?
- Are you aware of the development of a ‘cancer mission’ for Europe?

ADDRESSING THE SUN & UV SAFETY MESSAGE OF ECAC - HOW PARTNERSHIP-WORKING CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Speakers: Marbeth Ferguson - Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

Louise Herron - Public Health Agency

Denise McCallion - Public Health Agency

Karen Oldham - Dept. of Health

Forging effective partnerships is critical to achieving success in any policy and advocacy objective. In the first example during the workshop of local practice and experience, this session will consider the skin cancer strategy for Northern Ireland, examining the role partnership working continues to play.



Participants will be invited to discuss their own experiences at a national or local level acting upon the ECAC message concerning sun and UV safety.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- Is there a skin cancer prevention strategy in your country? If so, is this part of a larger framework e.g. non-communicable disease control programme or national cancer control plan.
- Do you have multidisciplinary networks or partnerships for Sun and UV safety in your country or region?

Thursday 23 May 2019

PATTERNS OF SUNBED USE IN EUROPE

Speakers: Brigitte Boonen – Euroskin
Elise Logan – Mid and East Antrim Council
Kevin O'Hagan - Irish Cancer Society

This session will focus on the topic of sunbed use for cosmetic purposes focusing on the policy and regulatory measures attempted in Europe.

The specific national example from Belgium will be presented as a case study in how to achieve effective public health regulation on sunbed use, highlighting the value of partnership working. This example will be complimented by the experience from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which will facilitate a discussion for participants on the lessons learned from each presented example.

At the conclusion, participants will be invited to consider possible complimentary working amongst cancer leagues as one potential concrete action to support the ECAC policy framework introduced the previous day.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- Is the use of sunbeds for cosmetic use widespread in your country or region?
- What regulatory approaches have been taken to protect consumers, for example, restricting use to under 18s, etc?
- Would your cancer league or organisation be interested to work further at a cross-border level to share strategies and ideas for improving the regulation of sunbeds for cosmetic use?



VISIT TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY'S ALL-PARTY GROUP ON CANCER

SPECIAL PRESENTATION - INDOOR RADON MAPPING: AN ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Speaker: Quentin Crowley – Trinity College Dublin

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas, which can accumulate indoors and result in an elevated risk of developing lung cancer. Globally, radon exposure is the second highest cause of lung cancer, resulting in tens of thousands deaths annually.

Encouraging individuals to find out about the levels of radon exposure in their home is one of the twelve messages of the European Code against Cancer. However, public awareness about radon and the steps to take to discover the radon levels in personal dwellings remains very low. ECL's

This presentation will provide a brief introduction to the topic and an update on the latest methods in radon mapping with examples from Ireland and Europe. The link to national and regional governmental action will also be stressed by highlighting relevant legislation.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- Are you aware of the levels of radon exposure in your country or region? Is there a specific action plan in place at the national or region level to address this issue?
- Does your cancer league or organisation communicate about indoor radon exposure to the public?

INTRODUCTION TO THE ALL PARTY GROUP ON CANCER

Facilitator: Roisin Foster - Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

Workshop participants will be invited to engage with members and representatives of the Northern Ireland Assembly's All-Party Group on Cancer during a special meeting of the group.

This session will cover the history, achievements and working practices of the group, providing inspiration for leagues to initiate similar concepts in their own jurisdictions. Members and representatives of the group will provide their own testimonials on their experience of working within the group, once again noting the value of collaborative, partnership working.

ECL acts as the secretariat of the MEPs (Member of the European Parliament) group against Cancer (MAC) and sees the All-Party group as an example of best practice. Participants will be encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences of working



with policymakers and legislators and reflect upon the challenges and opportunities for translating the All-Party group to their own countries or regions.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- Political will is noted as a key component for supporting the development and implementation of cancer prevention policies, what is the current attitude of political figures in your country or region towards cancer prevention?
- Does a comparable group exist in your country or region at the political level?
- If not, what are the factors that may prevent such a group being created?
- Are there other mechanisms (e.g. committees, public forum, etc) by which your cancer league / organisation engages with politicians?

Friday 24 May 2019

HPV VACCINATION IN A CLIMATE OF VACCINE HESITANCY

Speaker: Yvonne Morrissey - HSE National Immunisation Office

One of the key priority areas of ECAC in recent years has been the establishing and maintaining vaccination programmes for HPV and Hepatitis B.

Several countries in Europe have experienced an alarming loss of confidence in vaccination programmes, not least regarding HPV, and have had to develop new approaches in multi-sectoral partnerships to respond to this issue and restore confidence in the programmes.

As previous ECAC workshops have discussed the communicate strategies developed when addressing vaccine hesitancy, this session will look at the broader context of assuring the quality of vaccination programmes in a context of decreasing confidence in vaccination as a public health good.

Focusing on HPV, this session will enable a discussion on critical issues for policy action such as the approval of gender-neutral programmes.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- Has your country or region experienced a loss of confidence in vaccination programmes? Is this also affecting the uptake of the HPV vaccination?
- Has your country or region considered implementing gender neutral programmes in HPV vaccination (i.e. including boys)? Is your cancer league / organisation supportive of this approach?



ALCOHOL AND CANCER: FINDING THE APPROPRIATE POLICY MIX

Speaker: Sheila Gilheany - Alcohol Action Ireland

The ECAC issues a clear message that, in respect to cancer risk, there is no safe level of alcohol consumption. Feedback from previous ECAC workshops and related events have indicated that cancer leagues have experience difficulties in finding a suitable way to communicate and act upon the evidence of the link between alcohol consumption and cancer. Nevertheless, this remains a key topic and area for action at both the individual level and policy level.

This session will present the experiences of partners from the Republic of Ireland in advocating for governmental policies and actions designed to support individuals to act upon the recommendation of the ECAC.

Participants will be encouraged to share their experience from their respective countries to identify ways possible methods to overcome the frequent barriers encountered when addressing the topic of alcohol and cancer.

In preparation for this session, participants may wish to consider:

- What are the general trends for alcohol consumption in your country?
- Is there an awareness in the public in your country or region of the link between alcohol and cancer?
- Has your cancer league / organisation addressed the issue of alcohol and cancer through public campaigns, advocacy efforts, etc?

NATIONAL CANCER CONTROL PLANS & ROLE OF CANCER PREVENTION

Speakers: Aine Lyng - National Cancer Control Programme, Republic of Ireland

Carolina Espina - IARC

The final session will cover the issue of National Cancer Control Plans (NCCPs) as an essential tool and catalyst for policy action in cancer control. The example of the Republic of Ireland will be presented as a cases study to facilitate a discussion on the comparable and diverging aspects of NCCPs in the countries and regions of the workshop participants.

An overview of the NCCPs in Europe and the extent to which they support or compliment the ECAC will also be presented in this session to offer a common understanding of the issue of participants and demonstrate the heterogeneity across Europe.



SMALL WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Participants will be divided into several small working groups to discuss key points arising from the presentations during the final session on NCCPs.

The outcome of discussions will be presented back per group in plenary. The messages communicated by the group will be used to support the workshop summary report and form the basis of future collaborative action to enhance the focus of NCCPs on cancer prevention.

In advance of the small working groups discussion, participants are encouraged to think about the following questions:

- Is there an active, ongoing NCCP in your country or region?
- Does the NCCP address cancer prevention?
- If so, what are the priorities and targets in the area of cancer prevention?
- Is there reference to the ECAC in the NCCP?
- Is your cancer league / organisation active in either advocating for a NCCP, implementing a NCCP or the evaluation of the NCCP?
- Has the NCCP influenced cancer prevention policy in your country or region over time?
- If you do not have an NCCP in your country or region what strategies exist in place of a comprehensive NCCP?



Links

European Code against Cancer	http://cancer-code-europe.iarc.fr
Cancer Prevention Europe	https://cancerpreventioneurop.e.iarc.fr/
Cancer Mission for Europe	https://bit.ly/2Yv2ARq
Cancers attributable to UV radiation	https://gco.iarc.fr/causes/uv/home
Scientific opinion on sunbed use	https://bit.ly/2YqdGXM
Indoor radon concentration map	https://bit.ly/2JrROYD
HPV information centre	https://hpvcentre.net/index.php
<i>Draft</i> guidance on HPV vaccination for boys	https://bit.ly/2HI65E5
Alcohol and cancer	https://bit.ly/2RDU9o
NCCP portal	https://www.iccp-portal.org/map

Speakers' organisations

Alcohol Action Ireland	http://alcoholireland.ie/
Association of European Cancer Leagues	www.cancer.eu
Cancer Focus Northern Ireland	https://cancerfocusni.org
Department of Health (NI)	https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/
Euroskin	https://www.euroskin.eu/en/
HSE National Immunisation Office	https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/
Mid & East Antrim Borough Council	https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/
International Agency for Research on Cancer	https://www.iarc.fr/
Irish Cancer Society	https://www.cancer.ie/
HSC Public Health Agency	https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/
Trinity College Dublin	https://www.tcd.ie/