



Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe

Increased EU investment in health research will bring benefits to all

Although the benefits of EU-funded health research are easy to see, such funding does not reflect the high return on investment that it provides. It will need to be substantially increased before it can do so.

This is the message from speakers who will take part in the workshop on ‘maximising the value and impact of health research in Europe’, taking place in Brussels this morning (Wednesday), and organised by the Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe (The BioMed Alliance).

“According to a recent British analysis*, every GBP (€1,15) invested in medical research delivers a return equivalent to around 25p (€0,29) every year, forever. A healthy population generates an important economic benefit as well as a better quality of life for individuals,” Dr Paul Rübige, MEP, a member of the European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, is expected to say. “Biomedical research has advanced diagnostics, therapeutics and technology, and had a major impact on life expectancy and healthy life years.”

Speakers will call for more robust EU support for health research under the forthcoming 9th Framework Programme. The advantages of EU funding are most evident in health research, which is often too complex to be effectively supported or managed at the national level. Only 10.5% of Horizon 2020’s initial budget of €80 billion was earmarked for biomedical and health-related research, amounting to an investment of approximately €2-3 per EU resident per annum.

“We know from Eurobarometer surveys that a huge majority of Europeans want the EU to do more for health. By providing an ambitious budget for health research, FP9 can clearly demonstrate its intention to be responsive to citizens’ needs and wishes. We would like to see 25-30% of the FP9 budget dedicated to biomedical and health-related research.

“In addition to increased funding, a more strategic focus and long-term planning is required. This would be beneficial both for the research community and for EU policy and decision makers. A European Council for Health Research can ensure a coherent long-term strategy, with a prioritisation of funding allocation and continuity of successful initiatives,” Professor Axel Pries, President of the BioMed Alliance will say.

“Better funded and better organised research programmes are an urgent priority for the health of us all,” Dr Rübige will conclude.

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The workshop is taking place at Square de Meeûs, 29, Brussels, from 10h30 – 12h30, and will be followed by lunch

*<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/whats-it-worth-musculoskeletal-disease-research-januar-2018.pdf>