



Biomedical Alliance in Europe

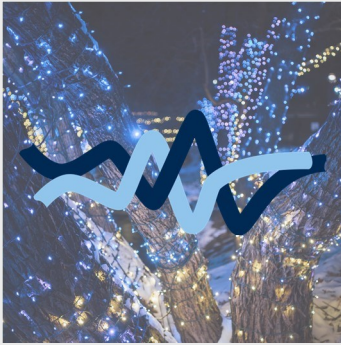
UPDATE DECEMBER

Overview 2020





Introduction



On behalf of the BioMed Alliance, we would like to wish you happy holidays and all the best for 2021. We are very grateful for your support in the past year and look forward to working on many interesting activities together in the future.

It has been quite a year, especially with the major disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, but even in these challenging times we can proudly say that the BioMed Alliance continued to grow both in membership, expertise, and recognition. Health is at the centre of EU affairs, and cooperation between different health stakeholders has never been more important.

The 10-year anniversary we celebrated this year was a good occasion to reflect on our successful achievements and to look to the future. We expanded our activities and grew by adding new member societies in our ranks. In 2020 we also welcomed a new staff member Anne-Claire, and we received the happy news that Loredana will very soon welcome a new baby.

Take a look at this special end-of-the-year Update providing an overview of the main highlights of this year and a glimpse of what lies ahead in 2021.

From 4 founding members in 2010 to 35 members in 2020

>100 policy statements and papers issued



>120 meetings of the BoD members



>200 meetings and events



Biomedical Alliance in Europe

2020 was an eventful year at EU level..



2020 was very different from what most of us expected and this also translated into new developments in EU affairs. While the COVID-19 pandemic forced most countries into crisis mode, coordination at EU level had a slow start partly because health is mostly a member state competence. The EU did take action and provided funding for COVID-19 related research, facilitated cooperation and information exchange and proposed a range of new health-related policy initiatives. These included a new standalone Health Programme (EU4Health), a recovery instrument from the pandemic and a series of proposals aiming to build a stronger EU Health Union. The new momentum for health policy at EU level is a promising development and could enhance coordination in the health field and strengthen resilience against cross-border health threats.





Biomedical Alliance in Europe

..and 2020 was also very impactful for the BioMed Alliance



We welcomed 3 new members

We were happy to welcome EFLM, ESCMID and ESHG to the BioMed Alliance, strengthening our influence and raising the total number of members from 32 to 35.



We celebrated our 10 years of existence

At the occasion of a memorable General Assembly, with influential guest speakers and a large number of members, we celebrated the successful achievements of 10 years of hard work and advocating to improve health and biomedical research in Europe together. We also released several videos, demonstrating the long way we have come since 2010 which are available [here](#).



We helped organise the EU Health Summit

Prof. Wilfried Ellmeier, BioMed Alliance President, successfully led a breakout session on Research and Innovation during the EU Health Summit on 26 October. The event was attended by hundreds of participants and being a member of the European Health Coalition and chairing this session is a milestone for the BioMed Alliance showing our recognition as a prominent stakeholder in the European health area.



We participated in the successful CORE-MD project consortium

Thanks to the support and the work of the members of the Task Force on Regulatory Affairs and Medical Devices, the CORE-MD consortium was awarded a grant under Horizon 2020 to contribute to evidence-based decision making for medical devices. This is the first time that BioMed Alliance has been named as a partner in a European project and we look forward to starting the work early next year.



We quickly adapted and supported our members throughout the pandemic

The pandemic brought a major transition in the organisation of events and congresses, we quickly moved our activities online and supported our members as much as possible. We organised several webinars on the organisation of online congress and created a dedicated page on our website gathering valuable information about COVID-19 (available [here](#)).



We left our mark at EU level

The input of medical societies was needed more than ever this year and the BioMed Alliance advised policy makers, provided input in the legislative process, replied to consultations and released statements on a range of topics. For example, we supported a letter signed by 48 MEPs and numerous health stakeholders to call for European leadership in health research (read the letter [here](#)) and strongly advocated for urgent and rapid progress in the IVDR implementation (see the statement [here](#)).



What is next for 2021?



We finished 2020 by circulating a survey asking members what we should focus on next year. Health research, collaboration with stakeholders, Continuing Medical Education, clinical trials and MDR & IVDR arrived on top of the list of priorities. These suggestions fit in nicely with the actions already planned for 2021; we will conduct a survey on patient engagement in CPD/CME in collaboration with the European Patients Forum, the CORE-MD project will start in April, we are organising a webinar on Treatment Optimisation with MEPs in February and will continue the work in our Committees and Taskforces.

We will also welcome **two new Board Members** in 2021: Prof. Wim J.G Oyen and Prof. Coen Stehouwer. Prof. Oyen will take over Prof. Steffen Gay who has come to the end of his term in the Board, and Prof. Stehouwer will take over the seat of Prof. Chantal Matthieu who had to step down due to growing responsibilities within the EASD.

A word of introduction from BoD Member Wim Oyen

“I am grateful to the membership of the Biomed Alliance for supporting my nomination by the European Association of Nuclear Medicine (EANM) and the European Cancer Organisation and electing me to the Board of the Biomed Alliance during the General Assembly on 26 November 2020, which I consider a real honor. I am a nuclear medicine physician with a medical practice in Rijnstate, a large training hospital in Arnhem, The Netherlands. My academic affiliations are with Humanitas University Milan, Italy (Professor of Diagnostic Imaging and Radiotherapy) and Radboudumc Nijmegen, The Netherlands (Professor of Nuclear Medicine). My clinical and research interests are molecular and hybrid imaging in oncology and radionuclide therapy of cancer. Additionally, I am actively involved in the EANM (Board Member 2014-2020, Congress Chair 2015-2017 and EANM President 2019-2020), the International Cancer Imaging Society (member of the Board and the Trustees 2016-present, President 2017-2018), the European Cancer Organisation (Board member 2012-2016 and 2020-present, Treasurer 2014-2015, 2020-2021). In all organisations, the EU agenda has become an increasingly important and relevant aspect of the work.



I am passionate about the care for cancer patients. Through my research and clinical work, I want to contribute to better diagnostics through molecular and hybrid imaging and to improvements of therapeutics through radioligand therapies. I am looking forward to work and collaborate within the strong and truly multidisciplinary Board of the Biomed Alliance for the benefit of its membership and first and foremost for the benefit of our patients. Funding of health research, better and faster translation of research to clinical practice, unbiased access to optimal treatment for all patients and decreasing hurdles and inequalities in access to innovation from North to South and from West to East in Europe will be my top priorities while serving on the Board of the Biomed Alliance.”



The date for the next Spring Meeting is confirmed



The BioMed Alliance Board of Directors has confirmed the date for the 2021 Spring Meeting :

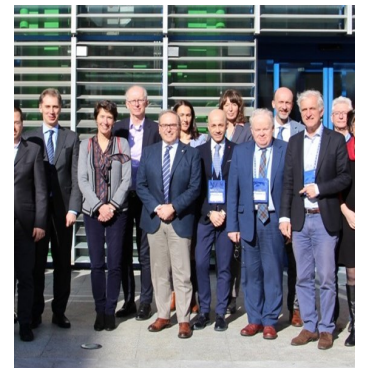
- Spring Meeting: 20 May 2020

The Spring meeting will be an online event.

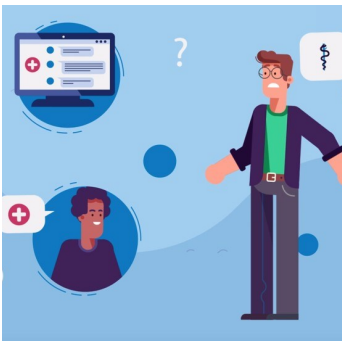
From advising to delivering concrete solutions

The BioMed Alliance worked relentlessly through the years to advocate for the improvement of health research, and to provide valuable advice and recommendations on health issues to policy makers. In a logical continuation of our advocacy work, we will now focus on delivering concrete advocacy solutions.

We set up the baselines of two projects that we will start implementing in 2021, intended to deliver practical help for decision makers. The CORE MD project aims at translating expert knowledge into advice for regulatory guidance for the evaluation of medical devices. The BioMedScape project, is based on CardioScape and we hope to extend it to other medical disciplines to develop it into a practical mechanism mapping scientific research projects across Europe.



Medical societies continue to innovate despite challenging times



Over the past decades, medical & research societies organised annual congresses gathering thousands of healthcare professionals providing them with the latest information on innovative biomedical research and new treatments. COVID-19 forced societies to completely change the way they provide CME/CPD in a very short time period. BioMed Alliance members managed to organise impressive virtual congresses using innovative technical solutions. They provided the full experience building virtual congress centres with online exhibitions, room for interaction and interesting sessions to be watched both live and as a recording.

During the relatively short and unexpected transition period, BioMed Alliance members have exchanged information and best practices in a truly cooperative spirit. We organised several teleconferences where members could present their congresses, the organising process, the issues they faced and potential questions. Societies also provided open invitations to other members to attend their congresses and to gather ideas. The BioMed Alliance facilitated this information exchange throughout the year and even organised a session during the CME Forum to provide participants a glimpse into the future of medical congresses.

There are clear pro's to holding virtual congresses. BioMed Alliance members have managed to reach more health professionals across the world, who found the virtual congress easy to combine with a busy work and family life. Nonetheless, for the moment these virtual congresses do not yet provide the same experience as in-person congresses, which allow for spontaneous information exchanges and a full immersive experience that is harder to duplicate in virtual congresses.

We will continue to support our members in 2021 to shape the future of medical congresses.



How can EU policy initiatives pave the way towards treatment optimisation as part of health systems?



Promote the value of academic clinical trials

COVID-19 has demonstrated the urgent need to have a healthcare system that places the patient at the centre and has the ultimate goal to solve clinical issues. This health crisis has put the spotlight on the importance of academic clinical trials in determining which of the many promising treatments deliver real benefits for patients.

Within the BioMed Alliance Taskforce on academic clinical trials, we have promoted the value of independent research for a while, highlighting the urgent need to include treatment optimisation studies as part of health systems.

Treatment optimisation plays an important role in improving the way treatments are utilised in real-world conditions through the conduct of studies. It can provide answers to important aspects relating to the use of novel therapies in real-world settings such as: optimal dose, duration, sequence, combination, and quality of life.

COVID-19 has catapulted health on the EU agenda and the European Commission put forward an ambitious vision called the European Health Union accompanied with legislative and policy measures (Pharmaceutical Strategy, the upcoming Horizon Europe, the EU4Health programme, and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan)

Thus, it is time to have a thoughtful discussion on what can be implemented in the current EU policy programmes to advance Treatment Optimisation as part of health systems.

The European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) and the BioMed Alliance will organise a webinar (3 February, from 15:00). The online event will bring together important health stakeholders and policy makers with the purpose to analyse how the current policy initiatives can facilitate treatment optimisation studies in the health systems across Europe. Please register your participation [here](#) and we very much look forward to welcoming you!

Upcoming important dates

- 26 January Policy Officers Committee Meeting
- 3 February Webinar on Treatment Optimisation
- 20 May Online Spring Meeting

