

The ERNs are building a common training and eLearning strategy

In its first face-to-face meeting held in Brussels on the 18th February 2019, the ERN Working group on Knowledge Generation decided to build a common training and eLearning strategy. Different elements were put on the table for discussion to analyze their feasibility, among which: the set-up of an eTraining and eLearning platform for ERNs, support for mobility of ERN healthcare professionals in the context of ERASMUS+ or Marie Curie programs, the establishment for a CV on rare diseases. All participating ERNs agreed that they were confronted with common challenges such as certification and recognition of the training programs or involvement of stakeholders like scientific societies or universities.

The aim of the meeting was to exchange information on the current actions of training and education implemented by the Networks and the Member States in the field of rare or low prevalence complex diseases. It was also focused on identifying the training needs, as well as potential means and tools to address them, with a particular focus on the e-training solutions, with an overall objective of structuring the work at the ERN community level in this field.

Very inspiring experiences of training and education were illustrated by some of the ERNs like the organization of meetings involving both senior and junior specialists to address specific knowledge gaps and ensuring transgenerational exchange of expertise (ERN SKIN), online webinars also opened to participants outside the Network (Erknet), site visits, eLearning tools and sponsorship of clinical exchange programs within the training offers of the network members (ERNICA), postgraduate accredited training and annual “summer school” (EURACAN), patient-derived eLearning formats for the training of students and residents (MetabERN). Member States representatives (Ireland and Spain) also underlined the actions put in place at national level and presented the outcome of the survey carried out with the participation of 12 Member States to improve patients’ access to information and to propose training activities for health professionals. Patients’ representatives also underlined the need of targeted training activities for patients, both concerning the knowledge to handle their own disease and empowerment skills for the representatives speaking on behalf of the patients’ community.

The Sub group “Training and Education” of the ERN Working group on Knowledge Generation gathers representatives of 12 ERNs, 3 Member States and the Commission. The meeting held in Brussels was well attended by 16 ERNs, Member States and patient representatives and consolidates the work conducted so far by the group since June 2018. Other ERNs had the possibility to join the discussion via teleconference facilities.

Further information on the ERNs and access to the ERNs webpages is available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/ern_en

https://ec.europa.eu/health/ern/networks_en