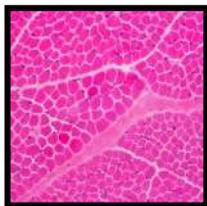


About the TREAT-NMD network

TREAT-NMD is an international initiative bringing together some of the world's leading neuromuscular specialists in a pan-European "network of excellence" aimed at improving treatment and finding cures for patients with neuromuscular disorders. Linking 21 partner organisations and over 300 doctors, researchers and other professionals throughout 11 European countries, the EU-funded network will enable experts to work together to share good practice and improve global standards of care.



Recent advances in cutting-edge therapies mean that clinical trials are no longer in the realm of fantasy. But such advances are being delayed because of the fragmentation that currently exists in research and healthcare systems across Europe and indeed the globe. Without validated outcome measures, consensus on standards of care and diagnosis, or uniform patient databases, setting up international trials of the most promising therapies is an uphill struggle. TREAT-NMD addresses all these areas of concern, with working groups of partners devoted to each of the major issues.

- Working with experts from all over the world, TREAT-NMD will develop common standards for diagnosis and care of neuromuscular disorders.
- The lack of national and international patient registries means that researchers and drug companies often have a hard time identifying suitable patient cohorts in their own countries, let alone internationally. Developing harmonised international patient databases and biobanks containing the key genetic data researchers need to target treatments to the appropriate patients is a fundamental goal of the TREAT-NMD project.
- TREAT-NMD will establish a Clinical Trials Coordination Centre to provide specialist advice and support the translation of research into new drugs for clinical practice.
- The network will expand its links with industry to develop new and effective treatments for neuromuscular diseases and will aid the progression of cutting-edge therapies from the lab to the clinic.
- Standardised protocols will be developed to assess the efficacy of novel therapies in the preclinical phase and establish the best animal models for the individual diseases; while in the clinical setting, outcome measures will be evaluated with the aim of standardising on the best approach.
- TREAT-NMD will also draw up standardised procedures for the production of therapeutic agents and for their toxicology, quality and safety assessment.
- Training and education is fundamental to the network's goals, and an online "clearing house" for research placements, visiting professorships and other training opportunities for scientists and clinicians will be created with the aim of "spreading excellence" across the globe.
- Patient organisations are an integral part of the network on a structural level, and further close links are being developed with patient groups worldwide to ensure we know how we can best meet patients' needs and so they can be kept informed of the latest advances in research and treatments.
- Although the TREAT-NMD project's funding was for a European network of excellence, the project already has a worldwide reach, since it makes no sense for each continent to reinvent the wheel. Links with top specialists across the globe are already in existence and will ensure that everyone moves forward together on the key issues.



Working with us

TREAT-NMD aims to be an inclusive rather than an exclusive network, and you do not have to be based in Europe or be a partner to be involved. Much international collaboration with experts from all over the world is already taking place, and new links are being developed.

If you are involved in any of TREAT-NMD's areas of interest and have something you'd like to say or a suggestion of where we could work together, we encourage you to get in touch.

Perhaps you're considering setting up a database for a particular neuromuscular disease in your country – contact us and we can advise you on the legal issues involved, the software you might need and the data you should be collecting and suggest how to make your database compatible with ours so that data can be shared. Perhaps you could offer a training placement or exchange visit for researchers at your institution, or perhaps you'd be interested in opportunities for training yourself. Perhaps you can contribute to our work on standards of care, on outcome measures, on animal models or toxicology. Write to us at info@treat-nmd.eu and we'll put you in touch with the relevant person within the network. We look forward to hearing from you.