The emerging generation of treatments are increasingly personalised and can bring huge health benefits. They will also aid growth in our already-strong pharmaceutical industry, attracting global investors.

Research regulation and the licensing of medicines must evolve to enable us to trial these new treatments and speed up patients’ access to innovations that will save and improve their lives.

We must act now to build on the EU’s rich science base and create a fertile environment for developing new treatments that can put us at the forefront of the next age of biomedical innovation.

Make the EU the primary destination to discover and develop safe and effective treatments for patients by creating a flexible regulatory and licensing system.

Fact...
Developing new treatments needs long-term investment
It takes around 12 years of research and drug development and £1.15 billion before patients benefit from new medicines.¹

Case study
The Innovative Medicines Initiative pools public and private funding to boost EU innovation
Jointly funded by the European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, the Innovative Medicine Initiative has a €2 billion budget making it the largest biomedical public-private partnership in the world. It aims to make the EU a more attractive place to conduct pharmaceutical research by removing potential bottlenecks in the drug development process. It supports collaborative research projects and builds networks of industrial and academic experts throughout the EU to boost innovation.

Fact...
Animal research is an important part of the research process
63% of people in the UK can accept the use of animals in medical research where there is no alternative and suffering is minimised.²
Take opportunities to join-up health research across the EU where co-ordination can benefit patients

People across the EU share a number of common health conditions that researchers are working on. Research resources can be pooled and activity coordinated. Some research projects have very large databases or equipment that can be valuably shared by EU countries.

**Case study**

**European co-ordination reduces the number of animals needed for medical research**

The laboratory mouse is one of the most important mammalian models for studying genetic and multi-factorial diseases in man. The European Mouse Mutant Archive (EMMA) is an international repository for mice used in medical research. It is supported by EU funding through the FP7 Capacities Specific Programme. Mouse eggs, sperm and embryos are stored frozen, meaning animals aren’t used unnecessarily in breeding to continuously maintain a colony. EMMA therefore has animal welfare benefits and protects against the loss of valuable mouse strains, many of which have been genetically modified at great effort and expense. The resources of EMMA support basic biomedical and preclinical research, providing the foundation for the development of diagnostics and treatments that save and improve lives.

**Case study**

**European funding encourages the building of a pan-European collaboration for research into a rare condition**

The AKU Society works internationally to enable research into the rare disease Alkaptonuria (AKU). With only 406 affected individuals across Europe, an international collaborative approach is the only way to recruit enough participants for the study of the disease and to test potential treatments. In 2013 the AKU Society and the Royal Liverpool University Hospital led a pan-European Consortium to successfully bid for a £4.6 million FP7 grant to conduct clinical trials of the drug nitisinone. The trials are taking place at centres in the UK, France and Slovakia. This example demonstrates how co-ordination between member countries can access EU funding for research into an area of high unmet need which will ultimately benefit patients.

**Case study**

**EU policy on rare diseases helps encourage research into new treatments**

Rare diseases are those that affect less than 1 in 2,000 people. Leadership from the EU has been hugely valuable for patients and industry. Europe-wide policies and legislation have been implemented to support the development of ‘orphan’ drugs which offer promising treatments for rare diseases but have a low commercial value due to the small patient group that will benefit from them. The European Commission has also developed a Communication on Rare Diseases which sets out proposals for a comprehensive, EU wide strategy on research, diagnosis, treatment and care for rare disease patients. This called on all EU member countries to develop plans for rare diseases by 2013 to increase integration of strategies across Europe.

Rare conditions affecting only a handful of people in the UK affect many handfulls of people across the EU as a whole. Researchers across the EU can valuably work together on initiatives to investigate specific rare conditions and coordinate the sharing of information across borders.


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