Health research classification and Transcan: the ZonMw experience

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The Netherlands organisation for health research and development

ESF: HRCS implementation workshop London, 22-11-2011

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- Public medical & health research financing organisation
  - Thematic research programmes + open programme
  - (thematic) calls for proposals for research projects
  - Communication & implementation (activities + projects)
  - 1, 2 & 4 year follow-up reports of closed projects

- Main financiers
  - Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS)
  - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW)

- Close cooperation with NWO, financier of other scientific disciplines
  - NWO Life sciences programme has some overlap with ZonMw programmes

Health research classification NL

- ZonMw
  - …No research classification yet
  - …Electronic project database: search by key word
  - …Considering implementation of a research classification system

- Royal Netherlands Academy of Science (KNAW) uses "Narcis" classification, 3 levels:
  1. Focal areas (public health & health care, basic science)
  2. Scientific disciplines (life sciences, medical sciences)
  3. Interdisciplinary research areas (genetics, fysiology, pathology, organ systems)

ERA-Net Transcan

- FP7 European Research Area network project
- Research financing organisations & research institutes
- 25 partners from 19 countries
- Start: 1 - 1 – 2011
- Aim: Reduce fragmentation in translational cancer research in EU member states
- Main tasks: work packages, joint transnational calls

Work package 2

- Leader: Cancer Research UK (CRUK)

  - Co-leader: ZonMw

- Aim: understand current extent of translational research and identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for coordinated translational research

- Focus: mapping of the nature and extent of translational cancer research funding in the EU

- Task: Cancer research classification: 1) survey, 2) CSO coding implementation, 3) full analysis for later joint transnational calls in Transcan

Survey results - partners

Classification system in use	Frequency
HRCS	0(1)pilot Norway
MeSh	2
CSO	3
Other	6
In planning	1 (AFS)

Interest in CSO classification: 16 partner organisations. Another 4 non-partners are interested

Resources implications (1)

- Legal

  …Sharing ongoing project information with third parties: to be discussed

- Financial

  …Person months for coding

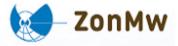 …Increased workload for programme officers: 0,0X fte's for future coding of projects

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Resources implications (2)

- Technical
    - …ZonMw is a starter in research classification
    - …Maybe Narcis *and* HRCS? For different purposes
    - …HRCS/CSO need to be interchangeable
    - …Code(s) should fit in our organisation's project database (software)

- Human
    - …Programme officers do rotate; not all have a background in cancer research
    - …Availability of personnel to code (previously) honoured projects

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Sustainability

- Cancer is a cross-cutting subject, not a programme

- Prospective: should programme officers all be trained in HRCS or should the task be assigned to a few responsible officers? This affects cost as well as continuity

- We have a flex pool: permanent staff whose programme is finished are assigned to another/new programme

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Thank you for your attention

For more information about ERA-Net Transcan visit:
http://www.transcanfp7.eu

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