

Report on EUCCONET funded visit to the International Agency for Research in Cancer to attend the third workshop of the International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium (I4C).

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Purpose of Visit: to attend the third workshop of the International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium (I4C). The workshop was held November 16–17, 2009 at the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyon, France.

Host: Dr Zdenko Herceg, Head of Epigenetics Group at the International Agency for Research in Cancer, was one of the co-organizers of the workshop.

The purpose of this two-day workshop was to discuss the progress of the International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium and to identify next steps. The focus was on the feasibility of pooling data from various international birth cohorts for the study of childhood cancer and whether additional new cohorts are needed as well. The workshop was related to EUCCONET's objectives of pooling data across international cohorts.

Approximately 70 people attended, a substantial increase in numbers from the previous workshop. I participated in the workshop as a representative of the Millennium Cohort Study, where I am Director of Methodology. I also presented a poster on the Millennium Cohort Study. About 25 posters were on display. Other EUCCONET partner studies represented included the Danish National Birth Cohort, ELFE, Growing Up in Ireland, MoBa and ALSPAC.

Presentations included:

- 1) selected cohort summaries and new cohorts,
- 2) purposes, pitfalls and practicalities of undertaking a birth cohort study and the case for a coordinating center,
- 3) progress in data pooling and case ascertainment across cohorts, in particular studies of prenatal folate & childhood leukemia and paternal age and childhood leukemia,
- 4) genetic measures (4 talks),
- 5) environmental measures (4 talks),
- 6) nutrition (2 talks).

Breakout sessions on Genetic Data and Environmental Measures were held before a general plenary discussion session. This plenary session discussed next steps and proposals for a future meeting. Working parties in the areas of Genetic Data and Environmental Measures were formed to take things forward.

Future collaboration: Collaboration with the International Childhood Cancer Cohort Consortium involving the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) will depend on the recommendations of these working parties. In particular, as much of the focus was on genetic measures and the MCS has not collected genetic data, the potential for collaboration is limited unless MCS collects genetic data. I learned from the talk "Use of newborn screening bloodspots in epidemiological studies of childhood cancer" of routinely collected and stored neonatal bloodspots as a potential source of genetic data for the MCS.

