Alliance4Life

Scientific Research in Clinical Hospitals

Enhancing National Research Productivity and Supporting the Professional Development of Healthcare Professional

UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, ŠALATA 3, MIROSLAV ČAČKOVIĆ HALL, ZAGREB

The roundtable is organised by the University of Zagreb School of Medicine as a high-level policy event within the Alliance4Life_BRIDGE project.

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER, 2026

Time	Programme	Venue
11:45	Registration	
12:15	**Welcome address** ***Professor Slavko Orešković, MD, PhD**, Dean, University of Zagreb School of Medicine*	Miroslav Čačković Hall, 1st floor
12:25	**Brief introduction to the Alliance4Life_BRIDGE project** ***Professor Filip Sedlić, MD, PhD**, Project Lead on behalf of the University of Zagreb School of Medicine*	Miroslav Čačković Hall, 1st floor
12:40	**A4L_ACTIONS White Paper on Combining Research, Teaching and Medical Practice,** ***Professor Emerita Nada Čikeš**, University of Zagreb School of Medicine*	Miroslav Čačković Hall, 1st floor
12:55	**Roundtable discussion** ***Professor Diana Delić Brkljačić, MD, PhD**, Vice-Dean for Research, University of Zagreb School of Medicine*	Miroslav Čačković Hall, 1st floor

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	Assistant Professor Ivana Pavić Šimetin, PhD**, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, Government of the Republic of Croatia* ***Professor Ivica Lukšić, MD, PhD, Director**, Dubrava Clinical Hospital Professor* ***Edvard Galić, MD, PhD, Director**, Sveti Duh Clinical Hospital* ***Academician Miroslav Samaržija, MD, PhD**, Acting Assistant Director for Research, University Hospital Centre Zagreb* ***Associate Professor Sandra Zekić Tomaš, MD, PhD**, Representative of the Director, University Hospital Centre Split* ***Professor Renata Pecotić, MD, PhD,** Dean, University of Split School of Medicine* ***Professor Domagoj Drenjančević, MD, PhD**, Dean, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek Faculty of Medicine* ***Associate Professor Ilija Brizić, MD, PhD**, Acting Vice-Dean for Research, University of Rijeka Faculty of Medicine* ***Professor Srećko Gajović, MD, PhD**, Acting Director of the Šalata Biomedical Research Centre, University of Zagreb School of Medicine* ***Professor Mario Habek, MD, PhD**, Professor of Neurology, University of Zagreb School of Medicine* *Moderator**: Professor Filip Sedlić, MD, PhD	
14:55	**Closing remarks**	Miroslav Čačković Hall, 1st floor
15:00	Reception	

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Science and healthcare are pillars of a developed society, underpinning public health, economic development, technological innovation and overall quality of life. Access to European funding, international research networks and collaborative programmes has enabled the modernisation of infrastructure, the strengthening of research capacity and improvements in healthcare. Science and healthcare work in close synergy. Scientific research generates new knowledge, diagnostic methods and therapeutic approaches that improve the quality of healthcare, while clinical hospitals and healthcare institutions provide an environment in which this knowledge can be applied, evaluated and further developed. Clinical practice also raises new research questions and encourages the development of innovative solutions to meet patients' real needs. This close relationship is fundamental to the advancement of modern medicine and represents one of the most important prerequisites for further societal development, improved treatment outcomes and stronger international competitiveness for Croatia.

The aim of the roundtable is to initiate a discussion on possible models for further developing research activities in clinical hospitals and faculties, taking into account the needs of the healthcare system, the challenges of organising clinical work, and the strategic interests of the Republic of Croatia in the fields of science, innovation and healthcare. The discussion will address possible national measures that could, in the long term, help strengthen research capacity within the clinical system, increase the international competitiveness of Croatian science, and create a more supportive environment for the professional development of healthcare professionals.

Topics for discussion:

• Benefits of research in clinical hospitals for the research sector

- Opportunities to use clinical data and samples in combination with other research models in basic and translational research.
- Improving the applicability of research findings and advancing translational research.
- Increasing the quality and number of scientific publications.
- Improving the competitiveness of applications for national and international research funding.

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- **Benefits of research in clinical hospitals for the clinical sector**
  - Enabling staff to advance their academic careers.
  - Increasing staff satisfaction by improving professional development opportunities and reducing the departure of healthcare professionals from Croatia.
  - Introducing new and complex diagnostic methods through prior research, enabling technology transfer and the development of human resources and professional competencies.

- **Research units in hospitals**
  - Existing frameworks for research activities in hospitals, including research centres and institutes, translational research and clinical research.
  - Examples of good practice from developed countries, including protected research time for physicians and the employment of researchers in clinical hospitals.
  - Developing research infrastructure and establishing research units in hospitals and faculties.

Alliance4Life is an alliance of 12 institutions that promotes scientific and academic collaboration and encourages reforms needed to advance research excellence by improving institutional governance in Central and Eastern European countries. Alliance4Life_BRIDGE is the alliance's third consecutive project, building on an exceptional 100% success rate. The alliance aims to strengthen institutional capacity and regional competitiveness, promote sustainable improvements in research performance, advance institutional reforms, and improve participation in international research consortia. Local stakeholders are engaged through national roundtables on institutional and research policy reforms.

The alliance and the project are committed to a range of activities, including the work of an international Virtual Research Centre that brings together leading researchers from partner institutions, as well as the internationalisation of doctoral studies.

In the previous project, A4L_ACTIONS, the School of Medicine led the "Careers in and beyond Science" work package, which aimed to deliver advanced programmes to develop scientific, general, humanities-related and transferable skills, supporting the career development of talented biomedical researchers

in Central and Eastern Europe. Particular attention was paid to career-system challenges and to the role of physicians and scientists in their commitment to research, education

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and medical practice in academic hospitals. Clinical practice also raises new research questions and encourages innovative solutions to real patient needs; it is fundamental to the progress of modern medicine and therefore to societal development, improved treatment outcomes and stronger international competitiveness. The University of Zagreb School of Medicine authored the study and the document *White Paper on Combining Research, Teaching and Medical Practice*, with final recommendations addressed to universities, research institutions, relevant ministries and the European Commission,

https://alliance4life.com/media/3803118/a4l_actions_d32_white-paper-on-combining-research-teaching-and-or-medical-practice_29-05-1.pdf

Organising Committee: Professor Filip Sedlić, MD, PhD; Professor Emerita Nada Čikeš; Professor Ana Borovečki, MD, PhD; Professor Božo Krušlin, MD, PhD; Professor Srećko Gajović, MD, PhD; Professor Tea Vukušić Rukavina, MD, PhD; Professor Goran Šimić, MD, PhD; Professor Željka Krsnik, MD, PhD; Associate Professor Monika Ulamec, MD, PhD; Associate Professor Ivan Pađen, MD, PhD; and Ms Lozika Mašić.

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