

## **EPCRC: Improved treatment of pain, depression and cachexia through translational research**

**The European Palliative Care Research Collaborative (EPCRC) is the first major palliative care project within the European Commission's Framework Programmes. The work includes identification of genetic factors, and development of classification systems, assessment tools and guidelines for three major symptoms and conditions.**

The project consists of eleven participating centres from six European countries: UK, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Norway, coordinated by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim. The project received a 2.8 mill Euro funding for a three year period, and started in November 2006. Parts of the application were based upon previous work undertaken within the EAPC Research Network.

The EPCRC has the following aims: 1. To identify genes and genetic variation relevant for inter-individual variation in opioid responses and genetic variation that may identify patients at particular risk for developing cachexia. 2. To improve classification and assessment of pain, depression and cachexia by computer-assisted approaches. 3. To develop evidence-based guidelines for assessment and treatment of pain, depression and cachexia in palliative care, and 4. To develop a long lasting European collaborative in palliative care cancer research.

The collaborative is dependent on broad input and feedback from the palliative care community and uses the EAPC conferences to this end.

As part of developing the computerised assessment and classification systems, a large, multi-centre data collection was launched in 2008 (the EPCRC-CSA study, Computerised Symptom Assessment of Pain, Depression, and Cachexia). The study involves 19 centres from eight countries and will continue through 2009. We hope to include about 1400 patients.

Regular updates on project activities are posted at [www.epcerc.org](http://www.epcerc.org)

Contact information:

Stein Kaasa, Project Coordinator, [stein.kaasa@ntnu.no](mailto:stein.kaasa@ntnu.no)

Dagny F. Haugen, PEO, [dagny.haugen@ntnu.no](mailto:dagny.haugen@ntnu.no)