

## MedTech Europe Feedback to the European Union's Beating Cancer Plan Roadmap

3 March 2020

### MedTech Europe supports the adopted holistic approach to beat cancer

The medical technology industry welcomes the holistic approach set out in the EU's Beating Cancer Plan of the European Commission as it recognises the need for a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and patient-centred approach that spans different stages of disease management.

We are committed to working with all stakeholders contributing to medical advances in the area of cancer. Medical technologies play an essential role in driving the four pillars of this action plan – namely prevention, early diagnosis, treatment and quality of life. In-vitro diagnostics (IVDs) provide information on i.e. the likelihood of developing cancer at an early stage, the presence and type of cancer, and the treatment success (precision medicine). In addition, surgery and medical devices are especially critical for effective treatment and care. Hence, harnessing medical technologies' potential and future innovations for beating cancer can create value for patients (improved outcomes and wellbeing), healthcare professionals (better clinical decision making) as well as healthcare systems (enhanced sustainability due to cost savings and efficiency gains).<sup>1</sup>

### MedTech Europe encourages to include the following considerations:

- **New care delivery models:** As stated by the European Commission, cancer care should focus on patients' needs and preferences (e.g. community care or home treatments) and done in coordination with multidisciplinary specialties. This requires replacing prevailing patterns of episodic and fragmented care delivery in many EU countries by more integrated and value-driven care approaches. Furthermore, the Roadmap could further focus on surgery which is a core form of treatment for most cancers.
- **Value of diagnostic information:** The value of IVDs lies in the actionable information that they provide to patients, healthcare professionals and health systems at every stage of cancer care – from screening to monitoring. IVDs are vital in determining which treatment will work, and as a result minimise its side effects. The value of diagnostic information does not only provide clinical benefits but an overall increase in the quality of life and safety for patients and the avoidance of unnecessary spending. Better leveraging this source of information should involve investment in screening and laboratory infrastructure and pathology capacity, clear evidence requirements, and reimbursement pathways for IVDs.

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of smart medical technologies to beat cancer please go to <https://nobel-project.eu/healthtech-world-cancer-day-2019-smarter-technologies-to-beat-cancer/>.

- **Co-morbidity and symptom management:** Co-morbidities such as cardiovascular conditions are common in cancer patients. Diagnosing and managing co-morbidities can have a tremendous impact on patients' quality of life and survival. Information provided by IVDs can help clinicians detect these co-morbidities, i.e. by identifying patients with increased risk of vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism (one of the most frequent causes of death in cancer patients<sup>2</sup>). Cancer care should also address disease-related symptoms such as pain or fatigue by means of supportive care.
- **Healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance:** Some cancer treatments can change the immune and blood systems, and it is estimated that one in five cancer patients needs antibiotics during their cancer treatment. Thus, comprehensive infection prevention programmes and control of opportunistically resistant infections are essential.
- **Digital health:** Leveraging digitisation is crucial for improving cancer treatment pathways and efficiency in health systems. For example, digital imaging and digital pathology programmes can support in detecting cancer. Another example is digital pathology algorithms (including AI) that can foster comprehensive diagnosing. These and other technologies require investment in increased digital literacy among healthcare professionals, care givers and patients.
- **Data sharing:** Knowledge and data sharing is essential in enabling a broad generation of scientific evidence and hence should not be limited to genomic markers alone. An integrated approach, considering both genetic and other available biomarkers, will aid in creating clinically effective testing algorithms and cost-efficient biomarkers that improve the standard of care. Establishing access to national databases and a platform of cloud-based data sharing are of utmost importance to facilitate data sharing.

With a comprehensive Beating Cancer Plan, the EU can have a prime role in:

- sharing best practice;
- revisiting its screening guidelines to increase screening rates, and providing guidelines and structural support to achieve high levels of quality and effectiveness;
- enabling the implementation of value-based healthcare and cross sectoral partnerships on health innovation to accelerate access to integrated care along the continuum of care; and
- promoting fast track funding/reimbursement models for innovative solutions,
- bridging resource constraints in countries with limited resources (via structural and cohesion funds).

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<sup>2</sup> Fernandes CJ, Morinaga LTK, Alves JL Jr, et al. Cancer-associated thrombosis: the when, how and why. Eur Respir Rev 2019; 28: 180119 [<https://doi.org/10.1183/16000617.0119-2018>].

## About MedTech Europe

MedTech Europe is the European trade association for the medical technology industry including diagnostics, medical devices and digital health. Our members are national, European and multinational companies as well as a network of national medical technology associations who research, develop, manufacture, distribute and supply health-related technologies, services and solutions.

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