



## **CODE Translation of article published in El Mundo on 9 April 2018 - [Link to article](#)**

### **Big Data - Harnessing data to transform cancer care**

Nearly a quarter of a million people are diagnosed with cancer every year in Spain, according to the Spanish Society of Medical Oncology (SEOM). But what does the future hold in reducing mortality rates? Can “big data” offer a solution?

The good news is that innovations in cancer treatments are advancing rapidly, with nearly 70 new anti-cancer medicines launched in the last five years alone. These will dramatically change the treatment landscape, offering patients increasingly personalised treatments which can delay or halt disease progression whilst also potentially increasing quality of life.

However, these exciting developments also pose challenges. With the new options come greater complexity. Information on how medicines are being used will therefore become critical to inform patient care. At the same time, ensuring access to the latest innovations is putting increased pressure on the healthcare system’s financial sustainability.

So, is “Big data” the answer?

The world of Big Data is exciting, but is still at an early stage in its evolution. In the near future, a more focused approach offers exciting potential - identifying critical metrics to provide a clear picture to help develop more personalised treatment approaches.

A collaborative approach is critical to harnessing the power of today’s data, bringing together patients’ associations, scientific societies, clinicians, healthcare providers, industry and authorities. A recent European initiative, the Oncology Data Network (ODN), showcases the value of such an approach.

A number of factors set the ODN apart. Its highly collaborative model is creating a shared vision to work together to deliver accurate and valuable information to clinicians. The ODN brings together information about the use of all anti-cancer medicines across all tumour types and patients and for all hospitals that want to join the Network.

At the same time, everyone recognises the vital importance of patient and clinician privacy. This is achieved by using cutting-edge technology to ensure that only non-identified data are shared using processes that comply with the new RGPD in Europe to ensure that citizens’ rights are protected.

The ODN is guided by a European Advisory Group including international experts such as Prof. David Kerr (Oxford University). A Spanish Advisory Committee has also been established to ensure that the ODN meets the requirements of Spanish patients and the Healthcare system.

This collaborative approach will deliver value across the oncology community: 1) Oncologists will have valuable information to help them identify more personalised treatments for patients;

---

2) Payers and providers will be able to establish sustainable novel payment agreements with pharmaceutical companies that more accurately reflect the value that these treatments offer patients. 3) Scientific and patient organisations will have access to information to help with cancer research and policies.

The ODN was established in 2017 with the support of the Collaboration for Oncology Data in Europe. Since then, Spain has joined the ODN along with 6 other European countries.

To learn more about CODE and the ODN, visit [www.code-cancer.com](http://www.code-cancer.com).

## QUOTES

*"Big data technology will allow us to measure the real value of medical interventions on cancer patients, allowing us to evaluate their impact." Enrique Grande. MD Anderson Spain*

*"We have vast amounts of data which are difficult to access and understand for those who did not collect it." Jesús Galván Romo, Vice President of the Spanish Society of Health Informatics (SEIS)*

*The large-scale analysis of data has allowed our institution to respond in months to questions that, until recently, required years or, were simply impossible to answer. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge remains to ensure that we are asking the right questions." Cristóbal Belda. HM Hospitals*

*"An informed society is a society with the capacity to make decisions". Noema Paniagua, Director General of AECC*

*"In order for oncologists to find specific information that they need to inform treatment strategies, the data they access must be relevant and useful." Jesus Castellano, Madrid Health Service*

*"We now have a challenge to build a shared tool that we design collaboratively from the start, for all to use." Jesús Galván Romo, Vice President of the Spanish Society of Health Informatics (SEIS)*

*"It is important for everyone who is charting the treatment and prevention of cancer to collaborate and find solutions". Ruth Vera, President of the Spanish Society of Medical Oncology (SEO)*

---