CHANCES

5th NEWSLETTER

Issue 5, January 2015

CHANCES 5th year progress update (Feb 2014- Jan 2015)

The CHANCES (Consortium on Health and Ageing network of Cohorts in Europe and United States) project completed its 5-year lifetime in 31st of January 2015. During these five years, CHANCES consortium has successfully fulfilled the challenging task of documenting, evaluating and harmonizing existing data across the fourteen participating cohorts, using structured procedures in order to meet the needs of research proposals developed up to the end of the project. To date 323 harmonized variables have been created and a dynamic web space (CHANCES WIKI) was devoted by THL for these purposes. Descriptions of the participating studies, definitions of harmonized variables, conversion rules form the different studies and the characteristics of the harmonized data are now included in a World Wide Web publication (URL: http://www.thl.fi/publications/morgam/chances_d9/index.html).

About 70 research proposals, in line with the project's objectives, have been developed by means of broad collaborations of partner institutions, research areas and scientific disciplines. Analyses of certain research projects produced novel and strong scientific evidence on the determinants of healthy ageing in Europe, including modifiable behaviors, nutritional factors, and environmental exposures, but also biomarkers and genetic profiles. To date 46 publications have been produced with reference to CHANCES and many more are expected to appear in the literature in the near future. A network of statisticians was established which continuously supported CHANCES analyses and actively cooperated within CHANCES WIKI.

A reliable and standardized instrument to assess health and ageing-related outcomes (Health Module) in a comparable fashion in European ageing populations was also developed and pilot studies were undertaken in Ireland, Greece, Sweden and Poland. Analysis of the pilot studies has been almost completed, and based on those, the Health Module has been finalized .

Program's coordination was successfully undertaken via the continuous and effective communication across the Consortium. The project's 5th plenary meeting was planned and realized at the end of the 5th year of the project. A dissemination workshop presenting the results of the project, entitled "Healthy ageing: definition, risk factors and implications for public health" was organised in parallel with the 5th plenary meeting in Athens (January 23, 2015) with the aim to shape the agenda of European public health policy for the elderly. 110 researchers, clinicians, and public health regulators, outside the CHANCES consortium and members, participated. The workshop was covered by the media, and included a poster session presenting results from finalized, as well as, from ongoing projects. A press release describing the project and its main achievements, as well as a Press Kit containing summaries of oral and poster presentations were prepared in English (the press release in Greek as well) and distributed to attendees, TV and radio producers, as well as to newspapers (including web-based).

CHANCES aims and objectives

Detailed information on health outcomes and their determinants in ageing populations is essential for health, social and economic research and management. The CHANCES project used existing data from 14 cohort studies from Europe and United States, in a consortium of 17 partners, whose efforts were channelled through 11 specific Work Packages (WPs) with the ultimate goal of to evaluate health problems that are evident among the elderly and to further explore risk factors that contribute to the development of these problems. The project has developed an efficient and flexible infrastructure for conducting pooled or parallel analyses of chronic diseases and disabilities such as cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes mellitus, cancer, osteoporosis and fractures, cognitive disorders, their determinants, and their economic implications for the elderly. The main deliverables of the project have been a series of reports and publications on the relation between socio-economic, environmental, lifestyle, and nutritional determinants, as well as, genetic profiles and biomarkers and major chronic diseases, disability and mortality, which can add to the existing evidence for preventive and regulatory action. The project has also produced a reliable and standardized instrument (questionnaire) to assess health and ageing-related outcomes (Health Module) in a comparable fashion in European ageing populations.

Project Coordinator

Hellenic Health Foundation
HHF
GREECE

List of Partners and Collaborators

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
UoA, GREECE

Umea University
UMU, SWEDEN

National Institute for Public Health and the Environment
RIVM, THE NETHERLANDS

Wageningen University
WU, THE NETHERLANDS

The German Cancer Research Center
DKFZ, GERMANY

Danish Cancer Society
DCS, DENMARK

Erasmus Universitair Medisch Centrum Rotterdam
ERASMUS MC
THE NETHERLANDS

University of Wuppertal
BUW, GERMANY

Queen's University Belfast
QUB, UNITED KINGDOM

National Institute for Health and Welfare
THL, FINLAND

Max Planck Institute
MPG, GERMANY

International Agency for Research on Cancer
IARC, FRANCE

The Brigham and Women's Hospital, Inc.
BWH, UNITED STATES

University College London
UCL, UNITED KINGDOM

The University of Tromsø
UIT, NORWAY

National Institutes of Health
NIH, UNITED STATES

Karolinska Institute
KI, SWEDEN

CHANCES DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP, Athens

CHANCES 2014-2015 dissemination activities

CHANCES has a comprehensive dissemination strategy aiming at supporting the effective and responsible use and dissemination of information generated within the project. Dissemination activities during 2014-2015, among others, include the following:

o Dissemination and Networking Workshop (Networking and forging working relationships with other existing or planned ageing cohorts and the CHANCES Consortium), Paris, France, 12th February 2014

o Satellite Symposium on CHANCES, entitled "Risk factors for healthy aging: Insight from the CHANCES Project", at the III World Congress of Public Health Nutrition, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, 10th November 2014 (Presentations made by HHF, DKFZ, UCL, QUB, RIVM)

o Dissemination Workshop: "Healthy Ageing: definition, risk factors and implications for Public Health: the CHANCES Project experience" (Communication of Project Outcomes and Results), Athens, Greece, 23rd January 2015

o Poster session included in the CHANCES Dissemination Workshop, on which results from finalized, as well as from ongoing projects, were presented

o Press Releases on the CHANCES Dissemination Workshop, as well as on the results presented during the Workshop

o Press kit containing summaries of oral and poster presentations distributed to attendees, TV and radio producers, as well as to newspapers (including web-based)

o Press Release entitled "Vitamin D levels may have a role in cancer prognosis, study shows" (DKFZ) on the BMJ page of EurekAlert, 18th June 2014

o Presentation of the CHANCES Project in The Parliament Magazine (feature on 'Active and Healthy Ageing'), 9th June 2014

More information on the CHANCES dissemination activities:
http://www.chancesfp7.eu/presentations.html
http://www.chancesfp7.eu/media.html
http://www.chancesfp7.eu/congress.html

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HELLENIC HEALTH FOUNDATION

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