



EUROPEAN ALLIANCE
FOR PERSONALIZED MEDICINE

"Every Second Counts: Modernizing Cancer Screening to Save Lives"

July 15th
12.00 – 14.00 CET

European Parliament
Brussels, Belgium
Hosted by **MEP Seán Kelly**

Cancer is one of Europe's leading health threats, with 2.78 million new cases and 1.3 million deaths estimated in the EU+2 in 2022—equivalent to one diagnosis every 11 seconds. By 2035, it is expected to become the EU's top cause of death, surpassing cardiovascular disease.

Although overall cancer mortality in the EU27 fell by 10% between 2010 and 2020, major disparities persist. Mortality rates vary up to 1.6-fold between countries and by as much as 37% within countries. Men have 70% higher mortality than women, and those with lower education levels are up to 2.6 times more likely to die from lung cancer. Screening participation remains worryingly low: in 11 EU+2 countries, under half of eligible women aged 50–69 have had a mammogram in the past two years. Colorectal screening rates are below 50% in two-thirds of EU+2 countries, with stark socio-economic divides.

Innovative tools—like risk-based screening, self-sampling, digital platforms, and AI—are not yet widely implemented. This growing innovation-access gap threatens the equity goals of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.

This event brings together political, scientific, and policy leaders to spotlight progress, identify barriers, and chart practical steps to scale early detection—especially for underserved communities.

Objective: To bridge the gap between cutting-edge screening innovations and real-world healthcare systems, addressing delays in access (as underscored by the Draghi Report) and fostering EU-wide policy action.

Purpose:

1. Showcase the results of EU-funded projects redefining prostate, lung, and gastric cancer screening.
2. Identify barriers to innovation adoption (regulation, funding, equity) and propose scalable solutions.
3. Mobilize policymakers to prioritize screening in the EU's health agenda, aligning with the European Beating Cancer Plan.



Target Audience:

- Policymakers (MEPs, EC/DG SANTE representatives)
- Health experts (clinicians, researchers, JRC scientists) Patient advocates, industry leaders, Media and public health stakeholders

*"The difference between early and late detection is the difference between life and death.
This event is where we turn science into survival."*

Expected Outcomes:

- Policy recommendations to accelerate screening innovation (e.g., fast-track regulatory pathways).
- Commitments from EU institutions to reduce disparities in access.
- Strengthened collaboration between projects, policymakers, and patients.

AGENDA:

Moderator:

D. Horgan, Executive Director, European Alliance for Personalised Medicine (confirmed)

Opening Remarks & Setting the Scene (30 min)

- **MEP Seán Kelly** frames the political urgency of improving cancer screening in Europe (confirmed)
- **Tiemo Wölken MEP**, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

Setting the Scene

Scientific and Policy advancements in early detection innovation

- **Ciaran Nicholl**, Director Health & Food EC-Joint Research Centre, European Commission (confirmed)
- **Vytenis Andriukaitis MEP**, European Parliament
- **Marc Van Der Buckle**, Head of service, Sciensano (confirmed)
- **John Serry**, Head of Oncology for Europe West, South and Nordic, AstraZeneca (confirmed)

Showcase of EU4Health Screening Projects (45 min)



Setting the Scene

- **András Kulja MEP & MD**, Group of the European People's Party, European Parliament

Driver Projects

- **PRAISE-U (Prostate Cancer)**: **Peter-Paul Willemse**, Head of the oncological urology board Oncomid North, Urologist UMC Utrecht ([confirmed](#))
- **SOLACE (Lung Cancer)**: **Brian Ward**, Director of Advocacy and European Affairs at European Respiratory Society ([confirmed](#))
- **iBeCHANGE**: **Marianna Agnese Masiero**, Project Lead, iBeCHANGE ([confirmed](#))
- **BRECISE**: **Xenia Beltran**, Public Coordinator, BRECISE ([confirmed](#))
- **SYNTHIA**

Q&A

Panel Discussion: Accelerating Innovation in Healthcare Systems (45 min)

Setting the Scene

- **Sirpa Pietikainen**, Group of the European People's Party, European Parliament

Stakeholder Perspectives:

- Policy levers to improve the adoption of Innovation

Vineet Datta, Senior Director of Global Strategy, Datar Cancer Genetics Limited ([confirmed](#))

- Barriers to equitable access to new technologies

Elizabeth Kuiper, Associate Director and Head of the Social Europe and Well-being programme at the European Policy Centre ([confirmed](#))

- Policy levers to improve screening participation

Amy Nolan, Director of Clinical Affairs at the Irish Cancer Society ([confirmed](#))

- Role of regional health authorities in implementation

Marco Di Donato, Policy and Project Manager, EUREGHA ([confirmed](#))

Q&A

Summary

- **Denis Horgan** synthesizes key takeaways
- **MEP Seán Kelly & MEP Tomislav Sokol**