



Gill Topp

EUREQUO

EUREQUO gathers momentum for UK and Ireland roll-out with assistance of key organisations

Dermot McGrath
in Paris

After a successful pilot programme in Scandinavia, the Netherlands and Spain last

year, preparations are now well advanced for the launch of the online European Registry of Quality Outcomes for Cataract and Refractive Surgery (EUREQUO) in a number

of European countries in 2010.

The EUREQUO system, which is designed to improve standards of care as well as develop evidence-based guidelines for cataract and refractive surgery across Europe, is scheduled to go live this year in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Turkey, Slovakia, Italy and the UK.

Creating such a Europe-wide network of national registries requires considerable administrative, technical and logistical planning. As lead partner for the EU-funded project, the ESCRS is working closely with the various national ophthalmological societies to create effective registries to ensure maximum adoption of the EUREQUO system and the efficient implementation of the data collection.

However, while the ESCRS is responsible for coordinating the overall project, it is the national registry manager in each participating country who will play the vital frontline role in recruitment and implementing the EUREQUO initiative.

Their job is to solicit the support of relevant national health agencies, ophthalmological societies and medical organisations with a final objective that the national registries (or datasets) are smoothly integrated into the overall EUREQUO network.

Gill Topp, EUREQUO registry manager for the UK and Ireland, says that her initial task has been to build support for the initiative through active networking with relevant organisations.

"Since my appointment in November 2009, I have developed direct relationships with key medical societies and government agencies including the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, the Care Quality Commission and the Department of Health. I hope this strategy will ensure the support of the organisations and allow collaboration with establishing information pathways. I have also identified both NHS Trusts and Independent Clinics to approach regarding gaining their participation for the first roll-out of data collection in March 2010. This trial run will involve recording data from pre-op through to post-op for all patients operated on in March," she said.

While it is still early days, the initial feedback from ophthalmologists in the UK and Ireland has been largely positive, she says.

"Many of the surgeons have already pre-registered their interest on the website following EUREQUO

exposure at conferences and meetings in 2009. And the feedback from surgeons I have spoken to has been positive, although naturally questions regarding administration and organisation arise. These concerns are alleviated by explanation of the web-based IT system and the support role of the registry manager," she said.

One of the major advantages of EUREQUO is that the data collection is conducted via a secure Internet server, which allows all participants to compare the accuracy of their outcomes with those of colleagues in their own regions and other countries as well as the entire database.

Although new initiatives always have to be 'sold' to some degree to their target users, in the case of EUREQUO the majority of ophthalmologists need little convincing that the project will prove beneficial to them, their patients and the profession as a whole, said Ms Topp.

"I found that it is not hard to get 'buy-in' to the registry as many surgeons have been recording their own data for some time. They are also now quite used to data collection for audit/research/NICE purposes. The main challenge is highlighting to them that project involvement will not cost them or their teams too much time and that the IT software process for data input is effective and efficient," she said.

Once the go-ahead has been given by all the respective national partners concerned, the next step for EUREQUO will be to start the process of inputting and validating real data from the surgical centres.

"The first data collection roll-out is very important as it is crucial to input real data into the system. This will then allow us to access and compare real results. It will also allow us to identify any further project needs in terms of IT, administration requirements and so forth. This initial collection of data will be taken from a small cohort of NHS Trusts and private practices who have a good geographical and case mix with high surgical volumes. It will also derive from surgeons who have requested user information and highlighted their interest via the website," she said.

With the UK and Ireland roll-out very much on schedule, the battle to win hearts and minds will continue in earnest throughout 2010, with EUREQUO promotions scheduled at the 14th ESCRS Winter meeting in Budapest, as well as the United Kingdom and Ireland Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (UKISCRS) satellite meeting in Liverpool and the UKISCRS annual meeting in Brighton.

Surgeons wishing to register their interest in EUREQUO can do so at www.eurequo.org/join.asp.

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Improve your surgical outcomes by monitoring your results

What is EUREQUO?

EUREQUO is a European Quality Registry for visual outcomes of cataract and refractive surgery

The project aims to:

- 1 Improve treatment and standards of care for cataract and refractive surgery
- 2 Develop evidence-based guidelines for cataract and refractive surgery across Europe
- 3 Make significant impact on the exchange of best practice between practitioners in relation to patient safety

Join the network

- ✓ EUREQUO gives a unique opportunity to monitor and compare results
- ✓ Quality registries create a sufficient basis for studying rare diseases, treatments and complications
- ✓ Collecting data will support you to make an audit report
- ✓ The collection of your data will facilitate the analysis of surgical outcomes and the development of evidence-based European Quality Guidelines

See www.eurequo.org for more information