

Women in Science: Fionnuala Doyle



Doyle describes the road to improving patient outcomes across Europe through the HARMONY Alliance.

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Fionnuala (Finn) Doyle, Head of Global Policy and Healthcare Systems at Novartis Oncology

In this installment of “Novartis Presents: Women in Science,” Fionnuala (Finn) Doyle, Head of Global Policy and Healthcare Systems at Novartis Oncology, discusses a pioneering project known as the HARMONY Alliance that is focused on capturing – and ultimately improving – patient outcomes across seven hematologic malignancies.

Launched in January 2017, HARMONY is a public-private partnership made up of 44 public partners and seven pharmaceutical companies from 11 European countries. Doyle and the core HARMONY team at Novartis – including Stefan Scherer, Vice President, Strategy and Innovation; Yoonchee Choe, Director, Global Value and Access; and Patricia van Dijk, HARMONY Project Lead – are working tirelessly with others at the company to help ensure HARMONY is a success.

Can you briefly describe the HARMONY project?

HARMONY is a pan-European outcomes-based platform that aims to leverage the use of big data analytics on clinical and real-world data from patients throughout Europe across seven hematologic cancers: multiple myeloma, acute myeloid leukemia, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, myelodysplastic syndromes and pediatric hematologic cancers.

HARMONY provides us with a unique opportunity, bringing together key stakeholders from numerous fields including medical experts, regulators, patient advocates, health technology assessment associations and the pharmaceutical industry.

We ultimately hope that people will look back on HARMONY and say, "That's when everything changed."

Can you talk a little bit about real-world data and why it's important for this project?

At the moment, there is a focus on gathering real-world data in the medical community. Clinical trials provide us with critical data, but given that only a minority of patients are enrolled in clinical trials, they don't always give us the full picture. There is so much more information to be gathered and harnessed. HARMONY allows us to collect data from several different sources, potentially granting us access to critical data for these patient populations that we haven't yet been able to analyze in an efficient and coordinated way.

What's special about HARMONY is that for the first time, a multitude of data can be used to help capture how diseases evolve in real time. It would be a real step forward for patients in Europe.

How is HARMONY different from other collaborations/partnerships?

What's wonderful about HARMONY is that it's truly an example of public-private partnership. It's funded by the European Commission and supported by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) through the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), Europe's largest public-private initiative that aims to speed up the development of better and safer medicines for patients. It's the first of its kind in terms of size, scale and scope, and the first for which Novartis is the nominated EFPIA lead in the field of oncology.

This partnership will enable a broad range of stakeholders to share this data and generate new insights for the greater good, something that is incredibly important for us as we aim to find new treatments for patients and further secure an understanding of these cancers.

What initially interested you about this project and encouraged you to get involved?

Novartis was given an opportunity to partner with so many organizations to co-create a very structured alliance for a big data platform that would enable us to align on outcomes for these hematologic malignancies, which was really compelling to our team. Everyone involved in this program has the same goal and vision: How can we improve the outcomes for patients with these seven hematologic malignancies? We all share that.

What do you see as some of the impacts that a patient or community could feel because of a project like this?

We ultimately hope that people will look back on HARMONY and say, "That's when everything changed." Our goal is to potentially transform the outcomes across many of these hematologic malignancies. The HARMONY model also gives the industry the opportunity to create a template, or a blueprint that can be applied to future projects in other disease areas, ultimately benefiting patients in Europe and well beyond.

HARMONY will potentially help inform how patients are treated – from the sequencing of medicines and how trials are conducted to transforming outcomes. I don't underestimate the challenge but I'm optimistic that we're going to have something outstanding in the end.

To learn more about HARMONY, visit the alliance's [website](#) and follow along on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#) for more information and updates.

"Novartis Presents: Women in Science" is an ongoing series showcasing women at Novartis who are helping develop innovative oncology medicines for people with cancer and related diseases.

Disclaimer: Responses have been edited for length

Finn Doyle discusses the HARMONY alliance to improve patient outcomes in Europe #WomenInScience

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