



# **European Critical Care Research Network (ECCRN)**

## **Revised Operational procedures and principles**



Revised Version  
September 2009

## I. Mechanisms overview

### Aim:

The aim of the European Critical Care Research Network (ECCRN) is to provide mechanisms to facilitate, integrate and support research conducted by members or research groups of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM) or collaborating individuals or groups. The ECCRN will be managed by the Research Committee of the ESICM, and will report to the Executive Committee for its actions and activities through the Research Committee.

### Who should submit an application?

The ECCRN offers benefits to Research investigators and Research groups.

### Which activities are eligible?

The ECCRN targets scientific and educational research activities of interest to the intensive Care Medicine community. The ECCRN may give consideration to a single Research project or to Research group activities as a whole.

### Overview of ECCRN benefits:

#### ***ECCRN Endorsement includes:***

- Inclusion in the ECCRN Projects database.
- Access to the ESICM members database
- Announcement in ESICM Newsletter
- Access to the European Registry for Intensive Care (ERIC).<sup>1</sup>
- Entitlement to display the ECCRN logo together with the following sentence: “Endorsed by the ECCRN of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine” on their documentation, emails and websites. The ESICM should be kept informed of any promotional material embedding the ECCRN logo.
- Entitlement to the ECCRN financial support package, if you request for financial support.

## II. General principles and obligations for contributors to the ECCRN

Studies or projects (referred to hereafter as ‘Projects’) which apply for and receive ECCRN Endorsement from the ESICM are partners in the ECCRN and agree to abide by the principles and obligations set out below.

All contributors to and participants in the ECCRN will agree to abide by the principles of ethical conduct in research and clinical practice. They will act in the best interests of their patients and of the scientific community. They will support the ESICM as a professional organisation committed to enhance patient care through research and education, and will help to foster the long-term objectives of the society.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that in both cases the contact details of members or ICUs will remain within the ESICM office, which will process the mailing

### III. Insight into the ECCRN Financial Support Package

The ECCRN financial support package includes assistance with:

- **Communication:**
  - Teleconference calls (number and extent to be defined with the project's promoter)
  - Space on the ESICM website for project description and communication between researchers.
  - Space on the ESICM newsletter for an insert promoting the project,
  - Opportunity to display documentation at the ESICM booth whenever available.
- **Grant applications:** Assistance in identifying funding opportunities.
- **Annual congress:** Provision of a meeting room during the ESICM annual congress, subject to space availability, and at the Brussels International Symposium in Intensive Care & Emergency Medicine, again subject to availability.

### IV. The ECCRN database

The goal of the database is to facilitate communication between project leaders in order to optimize the use of human and financial resources devoted to research and foster achievement of collaborative research projects. The database will thus contain detailed information about the approved Projects. Collected data may include data regarding the aim of the project, the study design, participating units, funding and contact information of principal investigators. It will be open for access to all members of the ESICM interested in critical care research. A summary of each project will be made available on the ESICM website.

### V. ECCRN contractual agreements

In addition to the general principles above, the Project's Steering Committee / the lead of the Research Group and the ESICM will agree to the following specific principles and obligations:

#### *ECCRN Endorsed projects / Research Group activities*

- Endorsed Projects/Research Groups remain independent scientific projects and activities. Inclusion in the ECCRN does not include the transfer of any rights to the ECCRN. This applies to ownership of data and analyses as well as study design, organization, or staffing of the Project.
- Endorsed projects / Research Group may subsequently apply for financial support.
- The Project / Research Group may, at any time, leave the ECCRN.
- The ESICM has the right to end Endorsement ± Support under the following conditions:
  - The Project is terminated – with or without results.
  - The Project / the activities of the Research Group demonstrate harm to patients or raise other ethical concerns.
  - The conduct of the Project/ the activities of the Research Group fails to meet current legal and ethical standards.

- The Project fails / the activities of the Research Group fail to provide data according to agreements.
- The ESICM may request the Project lead investigator on behalf of the Steering Committee to provide the ESICM Research Committee with a brief update on the project developments using a specific form.
- The ESICM may include the description of the Project / activities of the Research Group in the ECCRN database. Data from the study may also be included in this database after publication and upon approval of the Project's Steering Committee/ the lead of the Research Group.
- The ESICM does not accept responsibility for any legal or clinical consequences which arise from a given Project/Research Group

### ***ECCRN Financially Supported projects***

In addition to the conditions above, projects that are financially supported must:

- Agree and not exceed the level of financial support provided by the ESICM
- Incorporate an overhead charge on behalf of the ESICM in grant applications, the precise proportion of which will be discussed and agreed with the Financial Committee of the Society before the application is submitted.
- Share with the ESICM the contact details and information about ICU structures and organisation, provided that:
  - these items are contained within the project dataset
  - the participating ICUs do not prohibit the sharing of data with the ESICM
- Agree not to use contact information derived from the registry for further studies or any other purposes without explicit prior approval from the Executive Committee.
- Provide a progress report about the Project at least annually. Should the project team / Research team fail to deliver in due time, the ESICM Executive Committee would be entitled to suspend the ESICM support upon proposal of the Research Committee.
- Agree to submit an abstract for presentation at the ESICM annual congress
- Provide the ESICM office with assistance in order to update the ESICM website according to the project progress / the developments of the activities of the Research Group.
- Provide information on promotion efforts as well as potential sponsors already approached.

### ***Publication of Projects / Research Group activities endorsed or supported by the ECCRN***

- Submission for publications of all ECCRN endorsed projects/studies should acknowledge endorsement with the following statement: "The research project / study/ the activities of the Research Group XXXXX is/ are endorsed by the ECCRN of the ESICM".
- In publications arising from supported projects, mention the following accreditation statement: "This research project/study is supported by the ECCRN of the ESICM".
- The working documents, papers and results related to activities of research groups endorsed by the ECCRN do not represent official statements and positions of the ESICM.

## **VI. How to apply for ECCRN Endorsement**

Application is open to all investigators/entities interested in critical care research and associated subjects.

If competing applications of equivalent scientific quality are received, the ECCRN will recommend and facilitate collaboration. If this cannot be achieved, preference may be given to those groups which are already active within the ESICM, and fit best with its objectives.

**All projects / studies should be run in at least one EU country.**

The ECCRN Committee (within the ESICM Research Committee) will examine and decide upon applications within six weeks after submission of a complete application. Applicants are welcome to submit their project in advance to be advised on the eligibility and presentation of their application.

Investigators wishing to submit a project for ECCRN Endorsement must provide a copy of the Research Protocol, including:

- Brief summary of project
- Objectives
- Methods, including data items, data collection, and statistical analysis
- Organization and Coordination of the Project:
- Project leader, steering committee
- Time lines: start date, milestones, anticipated end date
- Ethics approval
- Collaborators and partnerships
- A declaration of potential competing interests, such as directorships, paid advisory appointments to industry or academic conflicts of interest.

Investigators must also provide the ESICM with the following information:

- Composition of the Research Group
- Organization and coordination of the activities of the Research Group
- Time lines: start date, milestones, anticipated end date of activities
- Objectives and expected “deliverables” of the Research Group
- Collaborators and partnerships

A template is available from ESICM.

The ESICM guarantees that this information will be treated as confidential until final approval (at which point they will be included in the ECCRN database). In case of rejection, the data are not processed further.

## **VII. Evaluation of applications to ECCRN**

The scientific review will be coordinated by the Chair of the Research Committee. All applications will be assessed by ECCRN reviewers appointed by the ESICM Research Committee (the Chair or Deputy Chair of the relevant ESICM Section will be also invited to assess the project). The criteria used to evaluate all the projects are based on the evaluation grid attached hereto.

Moreover, full consideration will be given to the following requirements when applying for ECCRN financial support:

- a clear and well-balanced financial plan,
- availability of other sources of support for the project
- the Financial Committee of the ESICM reserves the right to determine the precise level of support offered to approved projects according to the current financial state of the society.

Before a final decision can be taken, the Applicant may be asked to revise some aspects of the Project. Final decision for endorsement will be taken after approval by the Treasurer and the ESICM Executive Committee. The decision will be notified by the Chair of the ESICM Research Committee by post and electronic mail within six weeks.