



PRESS RELEASE

SPRINTT Project: the first European collaborative research to fight ageing

Eighty researchers from 11 Countries, 1.500 involved patients and a public-private grant of 49 Mln €: the SPRINTT Project will be co-coordinated by Professor Bernabei, Catholic University of Rome, and Dr Del Signore, Sanofi R&D

Rome, October 7th 2014 –Treating the diseases of old age is not enough: the real challenge is to fight ageing itself. What up to date has remained a pure utopia, **now becomes the specific target of the SPRINTT Project aiming at fighting directly physical frailty: main alarm of the ageing.** The project will pave the way for concrete anti-ageing strategies, able to fight off the worst consequences of physical frailty: disability and dependency.

The SPRINTT Project (*Sarcopenia and Physical Frailty IN older people: multi-component Treatment strategies*) has been designed by a group of European researchers, led by the Italian School of Professor Roberto Bernabei.

The SPRINTT project, under the umbrella of the IMI (Innovative Medicines Initiative), is equally funded by the European Commission and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). The budget for this important project amounts to more than 49 Mln €.

The core of SPRINTT Project is a controlled randomized Phase III clinical trial, based on a multi-component intervention: physical exercise, proper nutrition, technological tools. The Study will involve 1.500 people over-70 from all over Europe, defined frail as a result of specific tests. The methods and the clinical results of SPRINTT Study will be submitted to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in order to obtain a regulatory advice.

The SPRINTT project is the result of a rich collaboration between sixteen major research institutions in the geriatric field across Europe (80 researchers from 11 European countries) among which 3 main Italian groups, small medium size companies (SMEs) and five EFPIA members: Sanofi (lead), GSK, Novartis, Servier and Eli Lilly.

The leading Italian group will work in cooperation with Susanna Del Signore, Sanofi R&D, together with GSK, Novartis, Eli-Lilly and Servier, the private pillar of this initiative.

*“Identifying a treatment for physical frailty and its biological basis, sarcopenia or loss of muscle mass, is essential to delay or prevent its most feared effect: the motor disability – said **Professor Bernabei** –.The*

ability to walk without assistance at the usual speed, which is crucial for an independent life, is often the first skill lost with aging. Through the SPRINTT Project, for the first time Europe is betting on the concrete possibilities of Science to fight the main consequences of ageing and its most disabling effects, and to ensure the elderly more independence and a higher quality of life. The SPRINTT Project – Professor Bernabei continued – also represents a paradigm shift: we do not cure the diseases of the elderly, but rather we try to prevent the most serious drawback of the old age, the physical frailty”.

*“The SPRINTT Project – said **Michel Goldman**, Executive Director at IMI – underlines the importance of cooperation among the pharmaceutical companies, the universities, the research institutes and the small and medium-sized companies. Working together, all the players involved in the Health system can lay the groundwork for addressing the sarcopenia and physical frailty, which are unmet needs yet, and represent major challenges for our aging populations”.*

*“The physical frailty due to sarcopenia is a typical geriatric condition – **Susanna Del Signore**, Ass. Vice-President Global Regulatory Affairs at Sanofi R&D said –. Thanks to a public-private consortium as SPRINTT, it’s possible to launch a long term clinical trial, in Europe, for older people suffering from this condition. During and at the end of this program, we also expect a constructive discussion with the European regulators, in order to pave the way to innovative drug treatments”.*

Information regarding the SPRINTT project may be found at <http://www.mysprintt.eu>