

Tackling Medication Non-Adherence in Portugal: The Boost of the ENABLE COST Action

Melhorar a Adesão à Medicação em Portugal: O Impulso da Ação COST ENABLE

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Dear Editor,

Medication adherence is a crucial factor in the effectiveness and safety of medicines and is particularly critical for patients undergoing chronic treatments. Non-adherence is also a major concern among healthcare systems worldwide. Around 50% of patients with a chronic disease do not adhere to their therapeutic regimen, making non-adherence a widespread health problem, with a significant impact on healthcare systems.¹ In Europe alone, non-adherence has shown to contribute to nearly 200 000 premature deaths, with costs rising to €125 billion per year in avoidable hospitalizations, emergency care, and outpatient visits.²

In order to boost this research area, medication adherence has been highlighted as a key priority in policy and research agendas worldwide.² Technological advances have shown a significant potential to empower patients in detecting and managing non-adherence, and to support communication with healthcare professionals and shared-decision making.³ Therefore, one of the most important challenges is to find the best implementation strategy for integrating these advances into current or newly developed healthcare services across healthcare systems.⁴

Considering these issues, a European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action has been developed to tackle non-adherence. The main aim of the COST Action ENABLE (European Network to Advance Best Practices & Technology on Medication Adherence - www.cost.eu/actions_CA19132) is to create a multidisciplinary network of relevant stakeholders that can work collaboratively towards the economically viable implemen-

tation of medication adherence, thus enhancing technologies across different European healthcare systems.⁵ More specifically, ENABLE aims to (1) raise awareness of adherence-enhancing technological solutions, (2) foster and extend multidisciplinary knowledge on medication adherence at the patient, treatment, and system levels, and (3) accelerate the translation of this knowledge into useful clinical applications. This can be achieved through the interaction of four different workgroups, with participants from all 39 countries of the COST network (Fig. 1).

In Portugal, professionals from different fields (physicians, pharmacists, psychologists, physiotherapists) and different institutions of public/private higher education, as well as healthcare systems, are currently involved in this COST Action. ENABLE began in October 2020 and will run for four years. Because COST Actions are mainly focused on networking, different initiatives will take place during this period, including conferences, workshops, training schools, awareness events, and others.

We would like to invite anyone interested in enhancing medication adherence to participate in these initiatives and, if they want, to play a more active role by joining the Portuguese team. This letter stands as the first dissemination strategy from the Portuguese team and marks the beginning of the efforts in helping boost medication adherence in Portugal.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All authors contributed equally to the concept, draft, review and edition of the work.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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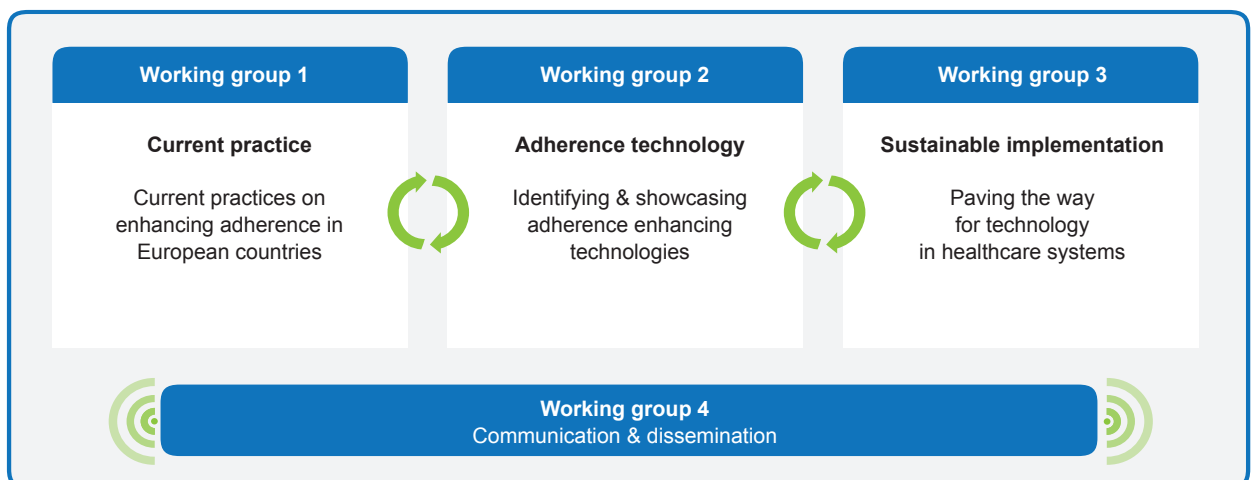


Figure 1 – Working groups and respective aims of the COST Action ENABLE (CA19132 European Network to Advance Best Practices & Technology on Medication Adherence).

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