



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public Health, Cancer and Health security  
**Cancer, Health in all Policies**

Luxembourg  
SANTE.B.1/PR/sg

**Subject: HaDEA/2024/OP/0027 - Exploratory study on the provision of care for Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) cancer patients in the Union**

Dear Sir/Madam,

With this letter, I would like to inform you that the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA), acting under the powers delegated by the European Commission, has initiated an "**Exploratory study on the provision of care for Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) cancer patients in the Union**", under service contract No. HaDEA/2024/OP/0027.

This topic supports a major goal of both the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan<sup>1</sup> and the Horizon Europe Cancer Mission<sup>2</sup>, namely, to improve the quality of life of cancer patients and survivors.

Despite its relatively low incidence among adolescents and young adults, cancer remains a significant contributor to mortality in individuals aged 15-39 (AYA age range). Unique biological characteristics of tumours in AYAs often result in poorer treatment outcomes compared to younger or older patients with similar types of cancer. AYAs, being in a distinct age group between childhood and adulthood, require specialised care issues such as fertility concerns, psychological well-being, education and career development, body image, sexuality and relationships, and alcohol/substance abuse. Moreover, AYAs demonstrate different health-seeking behaviours compared to adults, making it even more challenging to provide them with appropriate preventive measures and care services. Despite the necessity for dedicated AYA services, their availability varies significantly across EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, contributing to inequalities in cancer care provision, leading to inadequate support and care for AYAs facing cancer.

The study will be conducted across all 27 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, and aims to map the provision of healthcare to Adolescent and Young Adults (AYA) cancer patients and survivors. The analysis will produce a clear picture of the approaches available at national (or, where relevant, regional/local) level, including identification of barriers for the integration of dedicated AYA care and services in healthcare systems.

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<sup>1</sup> [A cancer plan for Europe - European Commission](#)

<sup>2</sup> [EU Mission: Cancer - European Commission](#)

Based on the evidence collected, the study will document and analyse the major barriers and enabling factors, detected in each of the 27 EU Member States, Iceland and Norway, for the design and provision of quality care before, during and after cancer treatment, but also highlight best practices and innovative approaches into this provision. Recommendations for future actions directed at EU Member States, Iceland and Norway will be developed, together with relevant strategies to improve the provision of targeted healthcare to AYA cancer patient and survivors.

ICF, together with Spark Legal and Policy Consulting ('Spark'), Fundació de recerca Sant Joan de Déu ('SJD') and Timelex, were awarded an 18-month contract to provide the contracting authority with an external and independent study, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

During the study, the project team will undertake consultations, which include interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, across the EU 27 Member States, Iceland, and Norway, to validate a model of provision of quality healthcare and services for AYA cancer patients and survivors, as well as to collect their views and opinions on gaps, suggested refinements and insights based on their expertise and/or experience. Surveys and interviews will also be conducted with stakeholders to assess the current state of AYA cancer care provision across the EU 27 Member States, Iceland, and Norway, to gather views on insights, experiences and data on existing practices, challenges, enabling factors, best practices, and areas for improvement.

**We would kindly ask you to support the consultation process when you are contacted by ICF, Spark Legal and Policy Consulting ('Spark'), Timelex and Fundació de recerca Sant Joan de Déu ('SJD') research team for the necessary arrangements. Your input is invaluable for gathering a robust evidence base for the study.**

Please be assured that all data provided to ICF, Spark Legal and Policy Consulting ('Spark'), Timelex and Fundació de recerca Sant Joan de Déu ('SJD') will be used for the purpose of this study only. All personal data will remain confidential and will be deleted as per the applicable data protection notice.

If you have any further questions regarding the organisation of the study, please do not hesitate to contact the study team ([AYAcancerarestudy@icf.com](mailto:AYAcancerarestudy@icf.com)).

Should you need any further information related to the objectives and overall design of the study, you may contact the project advisor at HaDEA, Soushma Sougoumarin ([Soushma.SOUGOUMARIN@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Soushma.SOUGOUMARIN@ec.europa.eu)).

Looking forward to your response and thanking you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Philippe ROUX  
Head of Unit