



**“Biobanks are bridges
connecting science and
medicine !”**

Daniel Naumovas

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Hospital Santaros Klinikos (VULSK)
and Senior medical biologist

Interview of the EuCARE partners

Q01

Interviewer: So, you are the Principal Investigator (PI) of the Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos (VULSK) . Tell us a little about yourself, why are you involved with the VULSK and why is the VULKS involved in this project.

Daniel Naumovas: I am the **head** of **Biobank** at **Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos (VULSK)**. Our hospital is one of the **biggest hospitals** in **Lithuania** and was a **leading hospital** for **COVID-19 patients**. **Experts** from **our hospital** were on the **government advisory committee** on **COVID-19**. When the **pandemic started**, my **team** and I knew that it was **crucial** to **start collecting biological samples** and **data** from **COVID-19 patients** for **future research**. Since the **beginning** of the pandemic, we have **collected** more than **80.000 different COVID-19-related samples**. Once **new SARS-CoV-2 variants** became more **prevalent**, we initiated a **national monitoring** of **SARS-CoV-2 genomic changes** in **Lithuania**, a project that was **responsible** for **sequencing** up to **15%** of all **newly diagnosed COVID-19 cases**. In the **last 3 years**, my team has **participated** in **12 COVID-19-related projects**, and so far, **EuCARE** is the **most exciting** and **promising one!**



Q02

Interviewer: Besides yourself, who else participates in this project from the VULSK?

Daniel Naumovas: Besides **me**, there are many other **amazing experts** working on this **project**, like **professor Ligita Jančorienė** – **head of Infectious disease department**. **She**, together with **physicians Dr. Birutė Zablockaitė** and **Edita Strumelienė** are **responsible for patient recruitment**. We also have **Vilija Gurkšnienė**, **head of Infection control department**, who **coordinates healthcare worker vaccination and recruitment** to the **EuCARE study**. **Valentinas Lycholip**, an **informatician** who is **proficient in data extraction** from the **medical history database**. **Dovilė Juozapaitė**, a **scientist**, who **oversees** all the **activities** and **quickly gets everything done**. And last but not least, we have **experienced nurses** who **collect biological material** for the **study** and **laboratory technicians** who **prepare samples** for **future research**.

Q03

Interviewer: The final question, the EuCARE project is divided into eight workpackages (WP), right? In which ones is the VULSK involved and what has been done already?

Daniel Naumovas: As a **hospital**, our biggest **involvement** is in **WP3**. We **contribute** with **clinical information, patient enrollment and follow-up**, including **hospitalized patients, healthcare workers vaccine cohorts (HCW), and long-term patients**. Up to this date, we included **1,500 hospitalized patients, 150 HCW, and 60 long-term patients retrospectively**. As of **prospective recruitment**, samples and data have been **collected** from **156 hospitalized patients and 62 HCW**. For all **prospectively included participants** together, we have **collected 1250 samples** (nasopharyngeal samples, blood plasma, and viable peripheral blood mononuclear cells) that are **ready** to be **analyzed**. We are **extremely happy** to have the **opportunity** to **work** in a **consortium** with the **world-level experts**, and we **believe** that the **results** of this **project** will be **extremely impactful** for **future pandemics**.

Interviewer: Thank you, Daniel.

Daniel Naumovas: Thank you very much!



If you want to know more about the
EuCARE project or our partners

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