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**“Cooperation is the
key to success”**

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Interview of the EuCARE partners

Q01

Interviewer: You are the Principal Investigator (PI) of the University Hospital Heinrich Heine Düsseldorf (HHU). Tell us a little bit about yourself, why are you involved with the HHU and why is the HHU involved in this project?

Björn-Erik O. Jensen: I am a **senior physician** specialized in **infectious diseases** and I have been **working** in the **Department** of **Gastroenterology, Hepatology** and **Infectious Diseases** in **Düsseldorf** since **2006**. I am **passionate** about **my work** and I am **intensively involved** in the **research** of various **infectious diseases**. Through **HIV research**, I got to know **Rolf Kaiser**, already about **22 years**. During the **COVID-19 pandemic**, long-time **collaborators** of **Rolf** and **myself** working in the **field** of **HIV resistance** began **working** on the **EuCARE project** and **invited** us to **participate**. I thought that **our department** could help **broaden** the **knowledge** of **SARS-CoV-2** because we were **caring** for **COVID-19 patients** very **early** in the **pandemic**. Between **January 2020** and **July 2022**, about **2500 SARS-CoV2 patients** were **treated** in our **university hospital**, and a **new isolation ward** was **built** in **6 months** to **respond** to the **high number** of **patients**. It was **professionally** a very **challenging time**. The **establishment** of the **EuCARE project** as a **response** to the **SARS-CoV2 pandemic** under the **EU Horizon grant** was a **great opportunity** and it is very **interesting** and **gratifying** to **participate** in a **project** with so many **great international partners**.



Q02

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

Björn-Erik O. Jensen: Besides me, **Torsten Feldt, Alex Killer, Matthias Lutterbeck, Paul Park, Clara de Angelis, Stefan Windhaber, Lila Haberl and Daniel Göke** are involved as **physicians** in **patient recruitment** and **visits**. **Joana P. Ventura Pereira** coordinates all **activities** of the **EuCARE project**, such as **document submission, recruitment, biobanking, participation in scientific meetings, database management, recruitment of staff, contacts with EuResist and other partners**, etc. Our **Study Nurses, Cecilie Feind and Sylvia Röder** are very **experienced colleagues** who **helped** us from the **beginning** with the **submission of documents**, the **maintenance** of the **ISF** and the **planning of patient visits**. **Inga Schmidt-Soltau** is **responsible** for all **biobanking activities** and **patient contact**. Very **important collaborators** from other **departments** at **HHU**, who are also **involved** in the **EuCARE project**, are **Jörg Timm and Nadine Lübke** from the **Institute of Virology**. They are **responsible** for the **lab analyses** related with **SARS CoV-2 virus**. **Sascha Stojanoski, Thomas Wolf and Julian Uszkoreit** from the **IT research department** helped us with the **data import**.



Q03

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

Björn-Erik O. Jensen: HHU is involved in **WP3**, which includes the **cohort studies**: the **Hospitalised cohort**, the **Post-Covid Study** and the **Health Care Worker (HCW) cohort**. After obtaining **ethical approval** for the **three** studies, we **trained staff** and began **recruiting patients**, **first** for the **HCW study** and **later** for the **hospital cohort study**. **Recruitment** is still **ongoing**. In **parallel**, we **imported data** from **2350 retrospective hospital patients** into the **EuCARE DB**. In the coming days, we **plan to contribute** with **data** on **co-infections** during **hospitalizations** of **patients** with **SARS-CoV-2**. Regarding the **post-covid study**, a **similar cohort study** is **ongoing** in **our hospital**. **Both projects** can **benefit** from **each other**, as they **complement** each other well in terms of the **proportion** between **inpatients** and **outpatients**. We are **working** on a **scientific collaboration** agreement between the **EuCARE** and **Beyond Covid projects** with the **intention** of **sharing data** and **samples** between the **two projects** to **answer** specific **scientific questions**. We are also **involved** in a **study** on the **development** of **vaccination** and **communication strategies** in **collaboration** with the **Institute of Virology in Cologne** and **Imperial College in London**. In addition to **providing data**, our **responsibilities** as a **partner** in the **EuCARE study** include the **preparation** and **review** of **scientific documents**. The **Institute of Virology of HHU** was **involved** in the **quality control** of **PCR kits** for the **lulli test**, which is being **performed** in **schools** and **kindergartens** as part of the **cohort study (WP4)**. We expect our **participation** in the **EuCARE project** to be very **dynamic**, as the **scientific questions** will **change** with the **changing pandemic situation**, making our **participation** in the project even **more interesting**.

Interviewer: Thank you, Björn.

Björn-Erik O. Jensen: Thank you very much!



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

Contact us:

<https://eucareresearch.eu/contact-us/>
