



# Introduction

Since its inception, the Ireland-Northern Ireland-NCI Cancer Consortium (also referred to here as the All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium or the Consortium) has strived to accelerate discoveries in cancer diagnosis, treatment, and prevention through partnership, education, and research – elements that have served as important building blocks to the Consortium’s success. Each year, the Consortium strategically builds upon its joint efforts to move closer towards fulfilling its vision of bringing comprehensive cancer control to the island of Ireland. In 2007, the Consortium focused its attention on two new initiatives, biobanking and health economics/cancer policy analysis, in addition to the six original scientific programs: cancer registries and epidemiology, clinical trials, information technology, nursing, prevention, and scholar exchange. The expansion of Consortium activities into these two new areas of scientific inquiry will enhance the value of each Consortium program and reaffirm the priorities set forth in the MOU, renewed in 2006.

The Consortium brought 2007 to a close after successfully sponsoring and participating in a number of activities and events geared towards promoting partnerships among public health and scientific communities globally. The Minister of the DoHC of Ireland, Mary Harney, T.D., commissioned an Expert Group to discuss the feasibility of a proposed National Cancer Biobank, to be established with Consortium sponsorship. The Expert Group, which included two NCI experts, met in late 2007 for a National Cancer Biobanking Workshop and Mini-Symposium. In addition, the field of health economics was highlighted with two workshops and the development of a new fellowship. Through their respective educational and research projects, the Consortium Working Groups achieved significant progress in advancing core initiatives. Detailed information on the Consortium Working Groups can be found in the “Year in Review: Our Programs in Practice” section of this report.

This Activities Report, which details Consortium news, events, and program developments during the 2007 calendar year, is distributed to cancer research communities in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the U.S., as well as individuals and institutions interested in the global fight to control cancer. The report is also disseminated to policymakers and is directly provided to the Minister of the DoHC of Ireland; the Minister of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) for Northern Ireland; and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) of the U.S. The Consortium is determined to continue working across cultural, economic, and geopolitical boundaries to defeat a disease that knows no borders. Going forward, the Consortium pledges to continue to build effective partnerships and establish cancer research programs with the aim of advancing cancer control efforts on the island of Ireland.