



Introduction

The Ireland-Northern Ireland-NCI Cancer Consortium (also referred to here as the All-Ireland NCI Cancer Consortium or the Consortium) sponsors programs ultimately aimed at furthering cancer prevention and control efforts, promoting the quality of cancer care through research, and improving disease outcomes across the island of Ireland. In pursuit of these goals, the Consortium serves as a catalyst for fostering collaborative cancer research and expanding joint educational fellowships. Consortium activities during 2008 centered on six core scientific areas, including scholar exchange, cancer registries and epidemiology, clinical trials, information technology, nursing, and cancer prevention. In accordance with the renewed MOU, the Consortium also continued to advance important initiatives in the areas of palliative care and health economics/cancer policy analysis.

The successful events of 2008 brought the Consortium one year closer to completing a full decade of service promoting partnerships among the all-Ireland and U.S. public health and scientific communities. The HRB/NCI Health Economics Fellowships in Cancer Program officially commenced in partnership with the NCI, HRB, and TCD, resulting in the award of two fellowships to Irish researchers in health economics. This fellowship program will be instrumental in strengthening the research capacity for health economics and cancer policy analysis across the island of Ireland by increasing the number of PhD-trained health economists on the island of Ireland. Throughout the year, the Consortium's Working Groups continued to play a critical role in advancing core programs, as well. Detailed information on each Consortium Working Group can be found in the "Year in Review: Our Programs in Practice" section of this report.

This Activities Report, which outlines Consortium news, events, and program developments during 2008, is distributed to the cancer research communities in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the U.S., as well as individuals and institutions that share the Consortium's vision of implementing global cancer control through collaborative research and education. The report is also disseminated to policymakers and is directly provided to the Minister of the Department of Health and Children (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.

By spurring scientific discovery and providing researchers and public health professionals with the knowledge, training, and technology required to defeat cancer, the Consortium is committed to facilitating the translation of scientific and clinical research into clinical practice. This work is fundamental to improving the lives of individuals and communities affected by cancer across all three jurisdictions. The Consortium will continue to serve people through science, ensuring that research benefits are effectively delivered to people, while providing a compelling model for multilateral partnership.