



DEVOTION
COST ACTION CA18211
Perinatal Mental Health & Birth Related Trauma:
Maximising Best Practice & Optimal Outcomes



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COST Action CA18211

“Perinatal Mental Health and Birth-Related
Trauma: Maximising best practice and optimal
outcomes”

Communication and Dissemination Plan

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Introduction

This document describes the communication and dissemination plan for the COST Action 18211 “Perinatal Mental Health and Birth-Related Trauma: Maximising best practice and optimal outcomes”. It outlines the means and channels of communication that will be implemented throughout the four-year project duration. In addition, it describes our target audiences/personas, i.e., who we are trying to reach with our research findings/impact. Furthermore, it outlines key dates related to planned actions and events. Finally, it contains a strategic guide to getting the right message to the most appropriate audience in an efficient timeframe. Science communications is the sharing of work with audiences outside your scientific area such as patients/service-users, industry, SMEs, policymakers, the media or laypersons. In contrast, dissemination is the sharing of results with your peers by publishing in journals or presenting at conferences. The main objective of the communication activities is to raise awareness about the Action activities, to raise the research profiles of academics involved, to highlight the pressing needs in society for this research and to broadcast its results to maximise its impacts. Other aims of the communication activities could include changing options and improving legislation. This document will also function as a ‘how to’ guideline for all involved stakeholders to establish their individual dissemination/exploitation plans within their local context and as such is sensitive to cross-cultural marketing issues including the need for communication messages to be intercultural. It is a ‘living document’ in that it can be updated over the Action lifespan. The communication goal is to maximise translation of research into practice, to bridge current theory-practice gaps bringing evidence to knowledge end users.

It is important to note that our communication and dissemination plan sets out to engage through the two-way flow of ideas to guide research. Content for communications will be created and adapted to respect local differences in culture, language, social contexts and needs.

Action description

The aim of the COST Action CA18211 is two-fold. The Action will establish an international multidisciplinary network of researchers, clinicians, NGOs and SMEs to 1) consolidate and disseminate current evidence and coordinate a joint effort to seek ways to prevent, minimise and resolve birth-related trauma, and to optimise emotional and psychological outcomes for parents and families and 2) to accelerate the translation of that knowledge into best practices that can be shared across Europe to reduce the societal and economic burden arising from birth-related negative/traumatic experiences. Areas of expertise relevant to the Action are perinatal mental health, birth-related trauma, family systems, health economics, genetics and epigenetics, and PTSD.

Specific objectives are to coordinate research and build capacity by;

- Developing a common understanding/definition of birth-related trauma and PTSD to inform guidelines and to guide the development of future standards for maternity care
- Understanding the factors that make women vulnerable to perinatal mental health disorders, particularly birth-related PTSD
- Developing/consolidating mechanisms/tools for assessment and screening of birth-related PTSD
- Coordinating current efforts to develop an understanding of the relationship between traumatic stress in maternity staff and traumatic birth

- Advancing our understanding of the economic impact of traumatic birth and informing the development of sustainable, cost-effective services for prevention, diagnosis and treatment
- Increasing consolidation and dissemination of results to the research community, general public and policymakers
- Building and unifying an international, multidisciplinary network of researchers and clinicians around maternity care, perinatal mental health and early childhood development using biomedical, epigenetic, socio-cultural, health-organisational, economic, and neuro-psych-social approaches to tackle birth-related trauma and the emotional and psychological sequelae for women, infants and families
- Facilitating access to a global network of researchers, clinicians and advocacy groups in the field
- Providing know-how for the next generation of researchers and clinicians in the field through access to the network

Project Implementation

The project is carried out by a high-quality network of different actors from thirty-one different countries in Europe, led by the COST Action Chair Joan Lalor from the School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin.

Scope of work and objective

This document describes a general communications strategy and specific activities dedicated to communication of the COST Action DEVoTION. The communication and dissemination plan aims to address goals that will:

- Inform and engage the relevant stakeholders in Europe
- Raise awareness around the Action and its communication activities, objectives and impact
- Reach the widest dissemination of the Action outcomes, among local communities, experts, decision-makers and academics, as well as towards society in general

Specific activities proposed are dependent upon communication with the stakeholders and dissemination of the project results. Informative material such as flyers, newsletters and posters will be produced and when the website is live, it will continuously be updated. Social media will be deployed and participation at conferences as well as publication in (inter)national scientific and technical journals will be publicised.

The objectives of this Communication and Dissemination Plan are to:

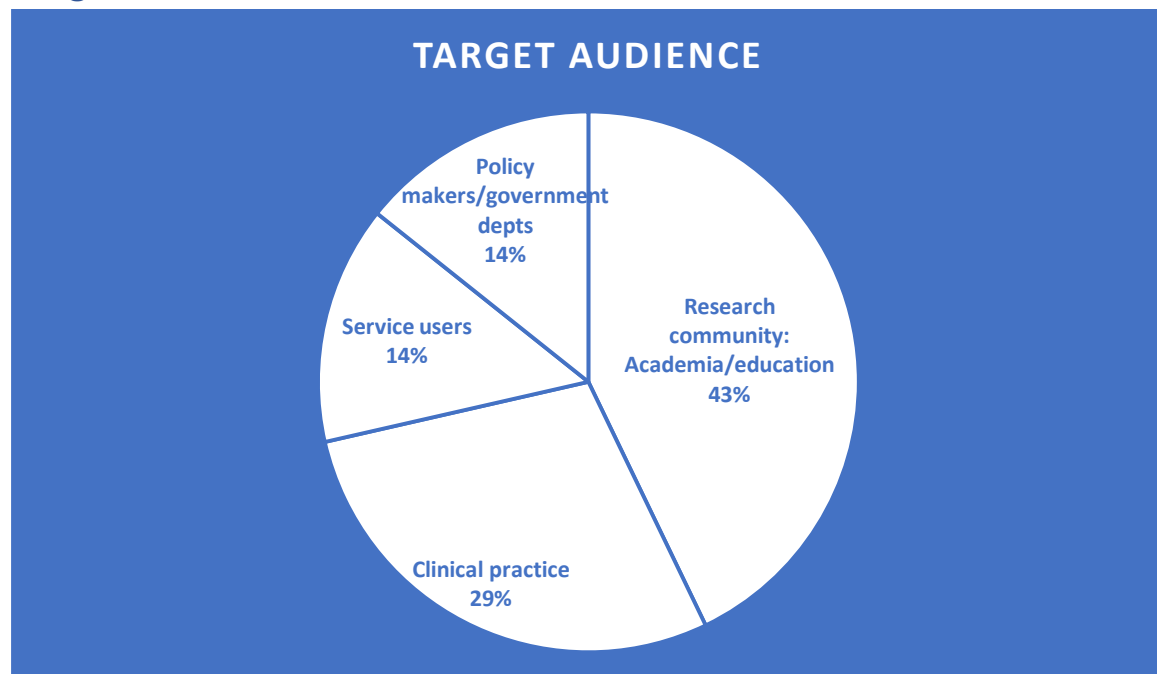
- Identify target groups and to look at their personas based on demographic, geolocational and psychographic attributes as well as their specific research interests and expertise
- Create an identity that is recognisable as the Action for example; the logo
- Plan how to share the knowledge gained through relevant results and appropriate channels
- Define the time period and forecast deadlines on a content planning calendar
- To identify from which working group the information / research results will be coming from and when
- To engage profoundly with our public across Europe and beyond. This is important because as a COST EU funded project, we have a duty to communicate the value of research by sharing objective interpretations of findings to inform decision-making.

The Science Communications Manager (SCM), Professor Antje Horsch from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, will oversee developing, maintaining and managing the Communications Strategy of DEVoTION. Key responsibilities of the SCM are to:

- ✚ Plan and coordinate the implementation of communication activities at project level
- ✚ Set the tone for internal and external communications
- ✚ Maintain records of communication activities
- ✚ Be the central point of contact with the COST Association for communication activities only
- ✚ Provide information to interested partners and other stakeholders in a convenient format

As per the Memorandum of Understanding, the Science Communications Manager will be responsible for sharing news, events and outputs through the website, Open Access publications and social media platforms to advertise conferences and highlight key papers/findings to make outputs available to the public.

Target Audience



The main stakeholders of the DEVoTION project are depicted above. The communication activities will target these audiences with the purpose of supporting dissemination activities by:

- Raising the level of awareness about the importance of DEVoTION
- Engaging stakeholders during conferences, workshops and other targeted events
- Promoting the interest on perinatal mental health as an important concern which might help individuals who have experienced trauma
- Sharing the results and outcome of the project

Through member's local technology transfer offices and our respective universities, the communications/press departments will be utilised to maximise media coverage.

We recognise that we have a wide range of audiences that must be communicated with ranging from experts in their fields to the general public without scientific backgrounds. Questions posed on

social media for example will be answered with objective, unbiased evidence and in the language that is understandable and accessible. We are acutely aware of the need to be culturally sensitive in our intercultural communication and cross-cultural capabilities.

Project visual identity

The Action logo design will be decided upon at a core group Skype meeting on 9th December 2019. A sample option is as follows:



All dissemination materials will be prepared in line with the visual identity of COST (<https://www.cost.eu/visual-identity/>) and “branding” of the project will follow consistencies in font (Bahnschrift from dafont/google fonts was used for the logo) and colour palette which will be used across the website also. The COST Association logo and EU flag with sentence about funding are to appear on all marketing materials without being compromised. Partners will be provided with working tools to be adopted through the project implementation such as:

- Templates for:
 - PowerPoint presentations
 - Word documents
 - Posters
 - Brochures/banners

Communication Strategy

The strategy sets up approaches and tools in order to keep the stakeholders regularly informed and to ensure the visibility of the project. As per the communication plans of other COST Actions, namely CA18100, communication objectives are to:

- Ensure effective communication between working groups;

- Ensure timely notices for requirements/meetings;
- Ensure optimum results for all communications and project expectations;
- Measure the results of the communication strategy execution and revise accordingly;
 - o Activities need to be timely
 - o Information must be accurate
 - o Messages should interest the target group
 - o Activities should be appropriate in terms of resources (human and financial)

Internal communication

The project seeks to be transparent in relation to both the Action participants as well as external stakeholders with interest in the subject. A dedicated web page will be implemented along with the Action Administrator circulating emails to all contacts on the eCOST system.

The website provides an online collaboration environment for storing, organising and sharing information and are accessible from almost all devices. Complementing this tool, Skype or Skype for Business will be used for communication among the Action partners.

External communication

The external communication and dissemination activities are on two levels, as follows:

EU/COST/International level, focused on the dissemination and promotion of the Action outcomes at an EU level

Local level, aimed at promotion, communication and engagement with local stakeholders and local target audiences in the selected case studies

Online communication

Online communication includes all channels through which the target groups and stakeholders can reach the project on the Internet. This will be carried out through the project's website and distribution of newsletters/email marketing.

The webmaster will update the website with news such as short training scientific missions (STSMs), training schools and announcements of events in a timely fashion with plenty of notice given to stakeholders.

Project website (URL to be established)

As per the Memorandum of Understanding, the Dissemination Committee (Working Group 6) will have within it a Website Committee to ensure outputs are available as widely as possible. The Dissemination Committee will be responsible for the dissemination of reports and papers generated by the Action to the public, media, research community and policy makers. The School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin has a research page that will showcase news about the COST project and a website link could be created in a news story, for example. "Mind's I Graphic Design Ltd" have provided a web development quote that includes services such as revamp of current logo design. The brief is for the COST project website to have similar functionality to the Evidence Synthesis Ireland site that is mobile responsive and will be built on the Wordpress Platform. It will be professional and user-friendly to make the project's results publicly available. Core group members will get access to enable them to edit (parts of) the content. The website will include COST features such as the COST logo, EU emblem and accompanying text acknowledging funding. Each participating member will have a link to the DEVOTION website from their organisation's website to promote greater traceability and outreach. We would like to acknowledge the work of Ciara

Henderson, PhD candidate, Trinity College Dublin, who designed the Action's logo and has organised the development of the website.

Newsletters / Press Releases

Press releases will be drafted by the Science Communication team in collaboration with Core Group members. If a newsletter is to be set up, a Newsletter Editor will be appointed, and it could be distributed to the project network of stakeholders (both internal and external) via an email marketing tool / email service provider (ESP), such as Mailchimp.

Wikipedia Country Pages

MC members of the Action CA18211 will edit Wikipedia pages for each one of their countries. Such pages will serve the following purposes:

- Establish a local presence for the COST Action 18211 in the national language
- To aggregate information concerning perinatal mental health and birth-related trauma and its context in each of the participating countries
- To provide a tool to co-opt other stakeholders in their countries and provide them suitable visibility. Such stakeholders will be invited to contribute to the page or to set their own Wiki pages that then will be referenced in the Action CA 18211 Wikipedia national page.

MC members may seek the support of local Wikimedia chapters in the process of establishing such pages. Wikimedia chapters are independent organisations founded to support and promote the Wikimedia projects in a specified geographical region (in most cases, a country). Like the Wikimedia Foundation, they aim to “empower and engage people around the world to collect and develop educational content under a free licence or in the public domain and to disseminate it effectively and globally”. See https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_chapters

An Editorial Board will be created to define guidelines for editing the national Wikipedia pages. In particular, it will set the main sections and sub-sections, which such pages should feature. These guidelines will enable a comparison outlook for DEVOTION sites and activities across the different countries participating in the Action.

Social Media

This communication and dissemination strategy (to be reviewed annually) provides a plan for the use of social media to ensure that the Action is keeping to schedule, identifying threats, ensuring communication mechanisms are effective. Through social networking platforms we will aim to provide timely and up-to-date information about project activities, interacting thus with target groups involved and concerned by the Action. All the content that will be uploaded onto the project's website will also be shared across the project's social media accounts. This will gain more visibility so people can identify the brand and our Google Search Engine Optimization (SEO) rankings will improve organically.

Whenever possible, news will be distributed through the official social media channels of COST Association:

1. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/COSTprogramme> or by tagging @COSTprogramme in a post
2. Facebook: @COST.Programme
3. LinkedIn company page: <https://linkedin.com/company/cost-office/>

Twitter account for the Action project is [@ca18211](#) and An identified hashtag is #costCA18211. The Facebook page has a target audience of EU and other citizens, service users and healthcare staff: www.facebook.com/COST-Action-Ca18211-104798544420827. Instagram has also been set up: <https://www.instagram.com/ca18211/>. A YouTube channel is in development to share videos of interviews that were recorded during the meeting in Amsterdam: COST ACTION DEvOTION <https://studio.youtube.com/channel/UC2zglv9KNN50955kbrNvYgQ/videos/upload?filter=%5B%5D&sort=%7B%22columnType%22%3A%22date%22%2C%22sortOrder%22%3A%22DESCENDING%22%7D>

Interim website

A resource website for information on response to Covid-19 and pregnancy and childbirth has been developed: <https://sites.google.com/view/covid19maternitycostactionca18/home?authuser=3>

ResearchGate

A ResearchGate project profile exists for the Action and anyone who publishes a paper related to it should add it to their own profile. Lola Ruiz Berdún is the coordinator of this:

<https://www.researchgate.net/project/CA18211-Perinatal-Mental-Health-and-Birth-Related-Trauma-Maximising-best-practice-and-optimal-outcomes>

Flyer

An information flyer / brochure will be produced at the beginning of the project and distributed to the relevant target groups. It will contain information about how to join the Action, an overview of the topics of the working groups and activities. A poster template will be made for use at conferences and our project's communication package will keep consistent with the overall COST visual identity guideline: <https://www.cost.eu/visual-identity/>

Newsletter

To be decided but key details could be as follows:

- Published every six months to report on events, list upcoming workshops/training schools/short-term scientific missions (STSM), show the progress of the Action in terms of publications and to include personal stories.

Infographics

Infographics can be designed by the researcher. Piktochart or Canva are programmes that can help to visually represent data that will be interesting for stakeholders. Such infographics would work particularly well on the website and at conference presentations.

Media / Public Relations

Members of the network will always be on the look out to engage with journalists in their countries to publish articles about the project.

Conferences and Events

An Early Career Coordinator (ECC) will support Working Group leaders in showcasing outputs from Early Career Investigator (ECI) successes. Events will be of reference to requests for ITC conference grants and PhD students will be able to see the events listing on the project's website.

Monitoring

The Dissemination Committee (Working Group 6) will oversee Intellectual Property (IP) and GDPR issues in line with COST implementation rules. Implementation of the communications plan will be overseen by the SCM to ensure that:

- The logo is included on all material created under the Action
- The number of visits to the project website are noted
- A media watch is conducted regularly to capture articles published etc.
- Reporting of the following numbers will take place:
 - o Events attended by network members relevant to the Action
 - o Newsletters/flyers distributed
 - o Recipients/subscribers of the newsletter
 - o Conferences and workshops organised
 - o Followers on the Twitter account
 - o Scientific publications

Photos should be taken at events to document action implementation.

Deliverables

Expected deliverables can be forecast on our social media planning calendar. The following content has already been identified based on expected deadlines:

1. Working Group 1 are expected to publish a scientific paper on qualitative experiences of birth trauma in Yr2, Q4
 - a. Publication of survey results of women's expectations of interactions with caregivers is forecast for Yr3, Q4
2. Working Group 2 expect the following outputs:
 - a. Scientific paper (scoping review) on the role of care-provider interactions in birth-related experiences (Yr2, Q2)
 - b. Scientific paper (survey results) on traumatic stress in staff Yr2, Q2
 - c. Scientific paper on the factors open to ameliorate in care-provider interactions Yr3, Q3
 - d. Position paper/guideline for policy makers Yr4, Q2
3. Working Group 3 expect the following outputs:
 - a. Scientific paper on prevalence estimates Yr3, Q2
 - b. Scientific paper on expectations and experiences of birth Yr3, Q4
 - c. Scientific paper on emotional costs of having less children than desired Yr4, Q1
4. Working Group 4:
 - a. Scientific paper on outcomes and biological factors Yr3, Q4
 - b. Scientific paper on stressors in pregnancy and long-term effects Yr4, Q1
5. Working Group 5:
 - a. Theoretical/position paper on existing methodological approaches, and development of a comprehensive analytical framework for economics evaluations of traumatic birth interventions Yr4, Q2
6. Working Group 6 are tasks with communicating all the above research outputs and making their results understandable by each audience to further its impact within society.

Risk Analysis and Contingency Plans

The implementation of the communication plan can be influenced by a wide range of factors, both internal and external.

Risk Assessment	Solution
Members do not complete SRs, publications etc. on time	Ensure templates are clear. Agree dates in advance. Have a reminder system so members can seek assistance. Circulate and identify difficulties early
Challenges with data available being too disparate, incomplete in terms of what is captured nationally/locally	Focus on key common or differentiating factors
Difficulties in engagement with clinicians or policymakers (and funding to meeting challenges of providing effective care in practice)	Minimise time required for such groups. Ensure the value of the outputs. Continued and sustained lobbying for standards of care with emphasis on the value of a paradigm shift from a curative to a preventative model. Ensuring the economic argument to support effective care is communicated clearly.
Low interaction between participants and WGs	Wide range of participants, many experienced with working with previous Actions. The MC, WGLs and WGVs will discuss quarterly participation in order to act early, good document and depository database management to ensure effective communication
Low impact of dissemination activities	Collaboration across disciplinary fields should be a mitigating factor, importance of TSs and STSMs for ECIs and PhD student (increasing membership) i.e. in ITCs. Responsibility-Early Career Coordinator
Low stakeholder communication	COST website with meeting schedule and outputs, OpenAIRE, use of technology for dissemination, members links with NGOs. STSM & DC

Role of the partners

Service users should be involved in the activities and feel like they are part of the Action. A first-step to involving them is to ask for existing affiliations of members to Associations such as the Birth Trauma Association in the UK. An email could be sent to all members in eCOST asking them to identify service-user organisations that are relevant to us in this domain and advising us of their contact details. MC members of each country should be communicating with their interprofessional networks.

Policy-makers such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) are to be engaged with at the results / measurable impact stage. Partner institutions could;

- Create a bridge between the project and the networks they are involved in
- Provide input to the content of the project's website

- Disseminate the activities and results of the project through their social media channels

Data processing

Details of members are stored in the eCOST platform on the COST EU website which is accessible through the Action Chair's email address and a password. The Working Group preferences of the members are recorded on a spreadsheet that is saved on a secure server within the School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin shared drive. An 'opt in' strategy will be adopted by the SCM when approaching researchers for their profiles to be published on the project's website.

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