

Surrey researchers accelerate procedures to test and monitor vaccine safety

University of Surrey researchers will develop cutting-edge tools to speed up and improve the testing and monitoring of vaccine safety, both before and after release to the market.



BioVacsafe Consortium countries

Since their discovery, vaccines have protected millions of people worldwide from a broad range of infectious diseases, making them one of the most effective public health interventions out. New and better vaccines are still urgently needed, yet their introduction is hampered by lengthy and expensive vaccine safety testing procedures – this is usually a slow, cumbersome, and extremely expensive process; the development of a new vaccine costs millions of Euros, and less than 1 vaccine in 10 makes it through clinical testing.

Biomarkers for Enhanced Vaccine Safety (BioVacSafe) was launched on 01 March 2012 and is a University of Surrey-led collaborative research project. Funded by IMI-JU, BioVacSafe is a public private consortium of 19 partners involving three of Europe's leading vaccine producing companies, experts from major academic institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises and non-governmental organisation actors. The project will draw on the latest life science research findings to profile how individuals respond to the different components of vaccines at the cellular, genetic and molecular level. This will allow the consortium to identify and characterise new biomarkers in response to both licensed and novel vaccines useful to identify warning signs that a potential vaccine may be reactogenic.

Professor David Lewis, BioVacSafe Project Coordinator, comments: “As new technologies are harnessed to make vaccines more effective, evaluating them for safety becomes increasingly challenging. By bringing together Europe's leading industrial and academic teams, this project, coordinated by the University of Surrey, will discover new tools to develop even safer and more effective vaccines.”

Vaccines are widely acknowledged to be one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to combat infectious diseases in both developed and developing countries. With billions of doses of vaccines administered globally every year, vaccine safety is a top priority for pharmaceutical companies, regulators and

the public alike.

Enquiries: Peter La, Press Office at the University of Surrey, Tel: 01483 689191 or E-mail: [p.la\(at\)surrey.ac.uk](mailto:p.la@surrey.ac.uk)

About BioVacSafe - <http://www.biovacsafe.eu>, [info\(at\)biovacsafe.eu](mailto:info@biovacsafe.eu)

Primary Investigator at Surrey: David Lewis, Professor of Clinical Vaccine Immunology

Co-Investigators at Surrey: Prof Derk-Jan Dijk, Dr Julia Boyle

BioVacSafe is a University of Surrey-led collaborative research project. Surrey is also heavily involved in the clinical trials in work package one. These trials will take place at the University of Surrey Clinical Research Centre and will aim to detect and survey novel biomarkers after immunisation. This will determine whether robust biomarkers can be identified that correlate with vaccine induced side effects (assessed by physiological responses and symptoms) after immunisation with five different categories of vaccines and naïve/non-naïve recipients.

About the Innovative Medicines Initiative - <http://www.imi.europa.eu>

The Innovative Medicines Initiative is the world's largest public-private partnership in drug research. By linking industry, academic teams, regulators and patients' organisations in joint research and training projects, IMI is transforming the EU's ecosystem for pharmaceutical R&D, making Europe a more attractive place for private investment in innovation.

By sharing research results that have not been brought together previously, IMI project partners are building new methods, models and tools that will speed up the development of novel therapies. IMI is funded jointly by the European Union (€1 billion in cash) and EFPIA, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (€1 billion in in-kind contributions).

About the University of Surrey

The University of Surrey is one of the UK's leading professional, scientific and technological universities with a world class research profile and a reputation for excellence in teaching and research. Ground-breaking research at the University is bringing direct benefit to all spheres of life – helping industry to maintain its competitive edge and creating improvements in the areas of health, medicine, space science, the environment, communications, defence and social policy. Programmes in science and technology have gained widespread recognition and it also boasts flourishing programmes in dance and music, social sciences, management and languages and law. In addition to the campus on 150 hectares just outside Guildford, Surrey, the University also owns and runs the Surrey Research Park, which provides facilities for 140 companies employing 2,700 staff.

The Sunday Times names Surrey as 'The University for Jobs' which underlines the university's growing reputation for providing high quality, relevant degrees.

Surrey is a member of the 1994 Group of 19 leading research-intensive universities. The Group was established in 1994 to promote excellence in university research and teaching. Each member undertakes diverse and high-quality research, while ensuring excellent levels of teaching and student experience.

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