Abstract Book

Europe Biobank Week 2016

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Oral Communications

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A – Innovation sessions

Session: A5: Biobanking in the spotlight – International standards and future perspectives

A5-2: Going the Austrian way: harmonization of sample handling procedures in compliance with international standards

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The term harmonization is currently on everyone's lips in the field of Biobanking and its major goals, which are an increase in sample and data quality and a higher degree of comparability and reproducibility, are widely accepted. However, targets and scopes of harmonization are still controversially discussed. Harmonization might cover a used reagent, a specific sample handling condition or an entire workflow, where its scope can range from single hospital departments to international biobank consortia. In Austria, the national node BBMRI.at picked up this important issue within its work package on quality management and agreed on a national harmonization of the entire pre-analytical workflows on the basis of the recently published CEN specifications on pre-analytical sample management (CEN TC 140). These standards were chosen, since their transition to the international (ISO) level is currently in progress, preventing unnecessary redundancies. For this, all sections of the technical specifications have been translated into process steps, allowing for stepwise assessment of compliance and facilitating the identification of appropriate quality indicators. Through this approach, the BBMRI.at associated Biobanks intend to be in the vanguard of providing uniformly processed biomaterial of high quality in order to foster comparability and reproducibility of scientific results.

Keynotes: BBMRI.at ,harmonization