



Interview with Professor Olivier Blin

Olivier Blin,
Director of the clinical pharmacology
and therapeutic assessments unit within CIC-

“Our network forms a genuine support platform for companies working in the industry”

Marseille is taking the lead by creating two new structures capable of evaluating medical systems and thus improving their efficiency, within a European context of changes to regulations on the use of medical systems. Professor Olivier Blin, director of the clinical pharmacology and therapeutic assessments unit within CIC-UPCET, describes the stakes of this unique approach in Europe.... and tells us who will make a significant contribution to the influence of our region in this sector!

> What is the role of the CIC-UPCET (Clinical Investigation Centre - Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutic Assessments Unit) ?

Professor Olivier Blin: The vocation of the CIC-UPCET located in the heart of Timone Hospital in Marseille created at the initiative of the *Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Marseille* and the University of the Mediterranean, is to carry out clinical pharmacological studies on human beings. Therefore, it will include the medical and clinical pharmacology laboratories, pharmaco-kinetic laboratories and the clinical pharmacology and therapeutic assessments unit for which I am responsible. It acts as an interface between the pharmaceutical industry and the hospital-university centre.

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For further information

The clinical pharmacology and therapeutic assessment Centre website
<http://www.cpcet.ap-hm.fr/>

> What were the two initiatives taken by the CIC-UPCET facing changes to European regulations for improved patient safety?

Professor Olivier Blin: A large amount of work has been done across Europe to reorganise medical systems designed to improve their efficiency and patient safety. No organisation had ever been set up to study medical systems (DM). As a result, and faced with increasingly strict European regulations, we took the initiative of creating a learned association across Europe in last spring. Therefore ES MEDE-TEC is responsible for publishing studies and organising events in the medical systems field to increase feedback from experience across Europe.

At the same time, we decided to create a national network around Paris, Lyon and Marseille, specifically for the assessment of medical systems.

> What is the role of this network?

Professor Olivier Blin: The initial criterion was based on sharing private and public skills to enable increased safety and efficiency of medical systems. The network forms a genuine support platform for companies working in this industry. They can thus access data that was inaccessible to them in the past. As a result, they can more quickly align themselves with the market and satisfy European regulations. It is a genuine turning point for manufacturers. In the past, prerequisites for marketing of medical systems were technical. Now, medical systems need to be assessed in terms of their efficiency, their relevance within a treatment protocol, patient tolerance, etc. and our network can help to provide this information.

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> What benefits can companies located in the region draw?

Professor Olivier Blin: There are many benefits. There are many small and medium sized companies in the EUROBIOMED competitiveness cluster working in this field. Unlike large manufacturers of medical systems, they do not have the resources to perform vast assessment studies on their equipment. They can use our network to access a great deal of information that will help them to align themselves with the market and regulations more quickly.

There are also regional benefits. The presence of a network creates genuine momentum around the existing potential in the Bouches-du-Rhône that intervenes on clinical trials, and on tests and manufacturing of medical systems. An advantage that could well attract new structures into Provence shortly.

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