

European Network for the Study of Cholangiocarcinoma consensus guidelines

Founding and mission

The European Network for the Study of Cholangiocarcinoma (ENS-CCA hereafter) is a network of scientists with an interest in the study of cholangiocarcinoma. The aim of the network is to promote research studies on biliary malignancies, by facilitating aggregation, knowledge sharing and collaborations. ENS-CCA has merely scientific purposes and, consequently, acts as in a non-profit environment.

ENS-CCA scopes, activities and members are listed in the official website www.enscca.org / www.cholangiocarcinoma.eu, which is controlled by the network.

The activities will be oriented to apply to research funds from European institutions; the final goal of the scientific activities of the network is to increase the health of the European society.

Members

Members participate to ENS-CCA activities according to their scientific interests. Members are asked to act in a collaborative fashion, to contribute, by this way, to the scopes of the network. It is mandatory for ENS-CCA members to respect an ethical code of conduct in respect of the rules acknowledged by the international scientific community.

Rights and obligations are summarized in the following table

<i>Rights</i>	<i>Obligations</i>
To participate to ENS-CCA studies	To respect the aims and scopes of the network
To promote and coordinate ENS-CCA studies	To act with a collaborative attitude
To participate to ENS-CCA meetings	To respect the collective decisions on the activities of the network
To have access to ENS-CCA knowledge and information sharing	To respect the international rules on the scientific ethical conduct
To have access to ENS-CCA databases	To act to avoid conflicts

The network is open to international collaborations; non-european scientists can apply to become ENS-CCA external collaborators, which allows to participate to the scientific activities of the network. External collaborators are not eligible to be selected for the ENS-CCA steering committee (see below).

How to become member

Any European scientist who has an interest to contribute and participate to the scientific activities of ENS-CCA is eligible to become a member of the network. The applicant can propose her/himself or can be proposed by one or more members of the network, by sending a request by e-mail to the chair of the steering committee. The steering committee will evaluate the request and judge for admission. Once admitted she/he agrees to share her/his professional contact details within the network and to have her/his name listed on the ENS-CCA website.

Steering committee

The steering committee of ENS-CCA coordinates the activities and supervises the operational needs of the network. The steering committee is composed of six, members, who nominate a chairman. The committee is proposed and nominated by the assembly of the ENS-CCA members during the biannual meeting and is in charge for four years. The composition of the steering committee has to be inspired to the principles of inclusivity and representation. Rotation, gender and country balance has to be taken into account when forming the steering committee. Every two years the steering committee is renovated of three members. Any ENS-CCA member is eligible to enter the steering committee, provided that she/he grants dedication and time needed to work for the good of the network and to comply with the duties of the steering committee (see below). The chairman is selected by the members of the steering committee and stays in charge for two years; commonly the chairman is selected between the members that have already served for two years in the steering committee.

The duties of the steering committee are listed in the following table

<i>Duties</i>
To coordinate ENS-CCA activities
To act in a transparent manner
To supervise and grant the equity of the ENS-CCA initiatives
To work for the application for funds destined to networking activities
To receive and circulate research/scientific proposals
To receive and approve ENS-CCA membership requests
To manage ENS-CCA website
To solve potential conflicts

***Ad hoc* committees and working groups**

By its nature, ENS-CCA is supposed to have a lean management system; *ad hoc* committees can be proposed when needed on specific issues and with a pre-defined duration.

The scientific activities of ENS-CCA are carried out by working groups addressing specific scientific topics.

Studies

ENS-CCA promotes any scientific study with an interest in cholangiocarcinoma. Any ENS-CCA member is entitled to propose collaborative studies to which other members are free to participate according to their scientific interest. Studies are preferably proposed in the course of the ENS-CCA biannual meeting; alternatively, proponents can send a research proposal to the ENS-CCA steering committee for evaluation and dissemination. Proponents (and participants according to the case) must raise the funds needed for the study.

Authorship

Authorship of ENS-CCA studies must respect the rules acknowledged by the scientific community, in terms of ethics, equity and contribution.

Manuscripts originated by collaborative studies need to list all who contributed to the study, with a priority in the list of authors given by the extent of contribution. The senior author is supposed to be the proponent/coordinator, unless differently agreed by the authors. The principal leader of the study is supposed to be the first author, unless differently agreed by the authors.

For studies involving analysis of databases and/or patient samples, the priority in the list of authors needs to take into account the number of cases provided. Similarly, the number of cases provided to the study should reflect the number of authors of the same group considered in the list.

Any manuscript originated by a ENS-CCA collaborative study must report in the acknowledgments the sentence: “Under the auspices of the European Network for the Study of Cholangiocarcinoma – ENS-CCA”.

When a collaboration is including network resources (e.g., patient registry), the authors should adhere to journal guidelines. If contribution/participation is NOT at the level as NAMED author, participants will be listed under a “the European Network for the Study of Cholangiocarcinoma – ENS-CCA” list, which will include name and affiliation(s).

Meetings

ENS-CCA plans to hold general meetings every two years. ENS-CCA meetings are generally intended as an occasion for an update of the ongoing studies (preferably by young investigators) and for discussion of new proposals. Members are entitled to propose to take care of the organization of the meeting at a given site of their choice, by presenting a written proposal to the steering committee to be then discussed and approved at the general meeting. The proposal should take care of logistics and of the principle of rotation between countries and sites. Once a proposal is approved, the organizing members are responsible for the fund raising needed for the realization of the event.

Conflicts

By constitution, ENS-CCA members act in a collaborative manner and prevent conflicts. Whenever a conflict may occur, the steering committee will evaluate the situation, by listening to parties, and judge the best and most honorable solution. In case of more complex cases, an *ad hoc committee* of external experts will be called to judge. Members are requested to accept the judgement and act consequently.

Amendments

The current document can be amendment upon proposals arrived to or moved by the Steering committee; proposals need to be discussed and voted at the members meeting during the ENS-CCA biannual meetings. Amendments are considered approved when voted in favor by 2/3 of the presents.