Interview with Tessa van der Geest
PedCRIN consortium member
(RadboudUMC, The Netherlands)

Interview to Dr. Tessa van der Geest

As part of our series of interview with the PedCRIN Consortium members, we had a pleasure to speak with Tessa van der Geest to ask about the role of Radboud University Medical Center (RUMC, The Netherlands) in the PedCRIN project.

RUMC co-leads PedCRIN WP4 (Pilot Trials) alongwith ECRIN and HUS-FI. The main task of this WP is to provide support for the PedCRIN funded pilot trials and to cover services as transnational access for the countries outside the sponsor country. These services only include regulatory and ethical submissions, trial monitoring, pharmacovigilance, support for insurance, trial product and biosample management. And does not provide any support or services for the clinical investigation neither at site level (study nurses, local logistics) nor through disease-specific investigation networks. RUMC is responsible for the launch of the call, selection of the projects, and the formation of the scientific advisory board and is contributing to the reports that are and will be written during the project”.

Tessa stated that the PedCRIN project broadens the trial management capacity of ECRIN in the field of paediatrics and improves the infrastructure for the management of the multinational neonatal and paediatric trials. “PedCRIN will help in expanding the capability of ECRIN. Additionally, the lessons learned within PedCRIN are of prime importance and should be taken into account in current and future European initiatives.

When asked about the main outcomes she expects from the project, Tessa pointed out she looks forward to having improved or expanded ECRIN tools and also implementation of previously developed tools (e.g. GRiP) and successful support of the pilot trials.
While commenting on the progress of the PedCRIN project, Tessa mentioned that “The launch of the call and the selection of the scientific advisory board went quite smoothly. However, to open studies for recruitment in new countries, a lot of hurdles needed to be taken, which took (and takes) far more time than was anticipated at the start of the project. However, problems that were encountered can be used as valuable lessons in the future”.

According to Tessa, ECRIN will benefit the most from this project. When asked what needs more support for the academic paediatric clinical research in her opinion, she highlighted study design, methodology and regulatory affairs.