PedCRIN has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 programme under grant agreement number 731046

Interview with Dr Pirkko Lepola
PedCRIN consortium member (HUS, Finland)

Interview to Dr. Pirkko Lepola

As part of our series of interview with the PedCRIN Consortium members, we had a pleasure to speak with Pirkko Lepola from the Department of Children and Adolescents of the Helsinki University Hospital (HUS, Finland) to ask about the role of her Institution in the PedCRIN project.

HUS co-leads PedCRIN WP4 (Pilot Trials) along with ECRIN and RUMC. 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. HUS 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”.

Pirkko highlighted that PedCRIN has a key role in supporting academic researchers with the burdensome administrative work they must face, which, like it or not, is necessary for every clinical trial.

When asked about the main outcomes which she expected from the project, Pirkko pointed out fully successful trials, finalized and reported, which will help to obtain new and valuable data for paediatric patients.
According to Pirkko, the project is developing “mainly as planned, only with minor delays with one very challenging trial, which includes a new medicinal product that needs to meet demanding regulatory authority requirements “.

Finally, in her opinion, academic paediatric clinical trials with medicinal products and medical devices must increase in number in Europe, as the industry sponsored ones are already increasing. She considers that this is the area that needs more support in paediatric research.