



THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
Ministry of the Economy

**Welcome speech by H.E. Etienne Schneider,
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Economy,
Minister of Health**

**Academic seminar on Medical Innovation bringing
together the worlds of innovation and healthcare**

October 16, 2019 - Maison du savoir/Belval

-Check against delivery-

Your Majesty

Your royal highness,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and a great honor for me to welcome you to this academic seminar dedicated to medical innovation from the perspective of academia, innovation and healthcare.

Health technology has an increasing impact on health and healthcare. Both Belgium and Luxembourg have understood the opportunities resulting from this development.

Therefore it makes sense that our countries seek to reinforce their collaborations in this highly dynamic field. Today will mark an important step towards this common ambition.

This event will further pave the way for developing a shared view about science as the driver for medical innovation, about research reaching out to concrete medical applications and about technology affecting the way our patients are taken care of.

As a Minister of Health, I am very much interested in facilitating equal access of all the citizens to the best possible healthcare and thus to improve their quality of life.

Nowadays, in healthcare, the “one size fits all” approach does not work anymore. Today, what we observe is a shift from a reactive medicine towards a more predictive, preventive, participative and personalised medicine adapted to the needs and specificities of individual patients.

This transformation impacts all the actors of the biomedical value chain, including companies which strive to offer caregivers the new diagnostics tools, drugs, wearable devices or medical softwares that allow them to specifically diagnose and treat individual patients.

Personalized medicine has been in the focus in Luxembourg for years. More than 10 years ago, the Luxembourg government decided on a diversification strategy. Among its pillars stands the life sciences and healthcare sector.

The strategic development and investments focused on personalized medicine helped to create a pole of excellence in biomedical research addressing medical needs in the field of neurodegenerative diseases, oncology and inflammatory diseases.

Furthermore, during the Luxembourg EU Presidency in 2015, we established personalized medicine as one of the key topics in the EU. Since the beginning of the life sciences development in Luxembourg, we were thriving for excellence in science and we have been looking for new ways to connect research and care.

The Luxembourg research community relentlessly strives in bringing forward new prevention measures, diagnostic tools and treatments to be tested and translated into the hospital. The final aim behind all these efforts is to contribute to better-integrated care in order to improve quality of life. This is the objective of the ParkinsonNet project. This integrated care network allows to continually improving the exchange between the patients and the healthcare professionals, and ensures optimal treatment, based on recent scientific studies. You will hear more from it later on this morning.

Healthtech and medical innovation are highly dynamic fields of activity. If we manage to keep track with the continuously evolving medical progress, I am sure that there will be a bright future in digital tools for better disease prevention, diagnosis, management, patient participation and care . I also believe that it is vital to invest into the progressive transformation of healthcare and into research that is in permanent search for innovations addressing personalised needs.

The young and dynamic community of Luxembourg-based HealthTech companies and start-ups already contributes to this vision by bringing their solutions to our hospitals and healthcare professionals, contributing to the creation of added value for the benefit both of the economy and the society as a whole.

Your Majesty

Your royal highness,

In my function as Minister of the Economy, my ambition is to further develop Luxembourg's vision for a diversified economy, based on breakthrough technologies. The Fit4Start HealthTech program is one very concrete example on how we pursue this goal. We gather experts and investors needed to advise both our national and foreign talents on how to avoid pitfalls and build a successful business in the healthcare market around our flagship acceleration program. The Luxembourg Health Technology sector has grown quickly over the past years as it benefits from the cross-fertilization of ideas and talents coming from the ICT sector, enabled by computational developments, data storage and processing technologies.

Luxinnovation is a major partner in this respect. As a trusted partner for entrepreneurs wishing to launch successful innovative activities in Luxembourg, this agency helps them to find pragmatic solutions for their business development ventures. All this is in line with the objectives of the Government to develop Luxembourg's economy in a sustainable manner through innovation and research.

Luxinnovation encourages and supports companies to innovate and grow in a smart manner and to prepare themselves for the challenges of the future, which brings about new and potentially disruptive technologies. The agency furthermore stimulates collaboration between Luxembourg public research and companies by facilitating the development of and the interactions within the healthtech ecosystem.

As you can see, Luxembourg has a lot to offer in the field of medical innovation and we are keen to share our know-how with our Belgium friends.

I am sure that we can mutually learn a lot from our respective experiences and thus bring forward our projects in the field of medical innovation and health technology in both our countries.

Let me conclude by saying how much I am looking forward to listening to the various speakers announced for this morning's seminar. I am sure this event will bring forward many innovative ideas on how to achieve a common and integrated vision on how best to use research, innovation and healthcare for the interest of the patients, caregivers and economic actors involved in this very dynamic and promising field of action.

Thank you for your attention.