

EUROPEAN REFERENCE NETWORKS

Helping patients with rare or low-prevalence complex diseases



WHAT ARE EUROPEAN REFERENCE NETWORKS?

The European Reference Networks (ERNs) gather doctors and researchers with high expertise in the fields of rare or low-prevalence and complex diseases. They are “virtual networks” which discuss the diagnosis and the best possible treatment for patients from all over Europe. 24 ERNs were launched in 2017, involving more than 900 highly specialised healthcare teams, located in more than 300 hospitals

The ERNs can bring the expertise that is often missing within your region or your country.

HOW DO YOU ACCESS THE EUROPEAN REFERENCE NETWORKS?

Your doctor will advise you on the appropriate level of care, for your illness. After having explored the possibilities within your own region or country and following a personalised analysis of your specific situation, your doctor may suggest cooperation with the relevant ERN. Your doctor remains your single point of contact if you are referred to an ERN.

HOW DOES A EUROPEAN REFERENCE NETWORK HELP YOUR TREATMENT?

When your case goes to an ERN, your doctor will convene a “virtual” panel of medical experts from across different disciplines and countries. They share your medical information, including for example CT scans, lab tests, X-rays, and analyse and discuss it together. Your doctor can therefore collect input from other colleagues and use it to improve your diagnosis or to find the best possible treatment for you.

