Clinical research is a critical step for the development and optimisation of solutions for treatment, prevention and diagnostics of COVID. ECRIN provides support to the planning and design of multinational clinical studies, and operational services to the management of the trial. This includes clinical trials on any intervention (medicines, medical devices, procedural intervention), on diagnostics, or on prevention (from behavioural measures through vaccines), and observational studies. Supported studies include repurposing trials testing new indications for marketed drugs, targeting either the viral infection or the symptoms, as well as personalised medicine research. Trials on innovative products and on vaccines are expected in the near future.

ECRIN is an instrument for multinational cooperation in Europe, taking advantage of Europe’s population size, medical and scientific expertise to boost patient recruitment and scientific excellence in clinical research. Eligibility criteria require the participation of at least two ECRIN Member/Observer countries (though other countries are welcome). In the COVID-19 context, ECRIN develops a fast-track procedure for access to, and provision of services (https://www.ecrin.org/activities/access-cost-policy). After supporting investigators and sponsors in designing and planning the trial (including on the regulatory and ethical context), ECRIN provides operational support to the sponsors for the management of the multinational trial, including ethical, regulatory and data protection approvals, vigilance, data monitoring and data management services (through ECRIN-certified data centres).

In the COVID-19 context, ECRIN has established, with its national partners, a COVID-19 taskforce whose mission is to:

1. Review and digest the scientific literature on COVID clinical trials
2. Develop a metadata repository for COVID trials making all the non-sensitive COVID-19 trial data accessible
3. Develop a database on the regulatory, ethical and data protection fast track approvals across all European countries
4. Ensure preparedness of its national clinical trial unit (CTU) partners for COVID trials
5. Combine and coordinate national initiatives to promote multinational rather than national trials, including through connection with national funders, sponsors investigators and CTUs
6. Develop partnership with national and pan-European investigation networks on infectious diseases and intensive care
7. Outreach to investigators, sponsors, patients, policymakers, funders, and citizens
8. International cooperation and outreach, including with WHO and through CRIGH and other initiatives.

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