D5.4 Update – Communication Plan

777363 – DRIVE

Development of Robust and Innovative Vaccine Effectiveness

WP5 – Communication

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Document History

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1. Overview

The Development of Robust and Innovative Vaccine Effectiveness (DRIVE) project is an IMI-funded public-private partnership aiming to build capacity in Europe for estimating brand-specific influenza vaccine effectiveness (IVE). This is a revised and updated overall communications plan for the DRIVE project. The plan includes the elements which help in communicating the aims, objectives and added value that DRIVE can offer until the project ends in mid-2022.

1.1. Background

Seasonal influenza is an acute respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses which circulate in all parts of the world. Influenza mainly spreads through respiratory droplets and occurs in annual epidemics that are associated with significant morbidity and mortality. The illness is accompanied by fever and variable degrees of other systemic symptoms, ranging from mild fatigue to respiratory failure and even death.

Influenza, which occurs in annual epidemics and outbreaks, is a major public health burden responsible for an estimated 290,000 to 650,000 respiratory deaths each year globally [WHO, 2019]. In the European Union (EU), depending on seasonal variation, the number of symptomatic cases ranges from 4–50 million with 15,000 to 70,000 deaths each year [ECDC, 2019]. Seasonal influenza in Europe is large and associated with high cumulative social and economic burden manifesting, not only as direct medical costs, but also as reduced quality of life and lost work productivity [Keech, 2008].

Vaccines are the cornerstone of preventing influenza but their effectiveness can vary from year to year and across recipient groups. While influenza vaccine effectiveness is being evaluated annually in many EU member states, the results are generally not disclosed timely (during the course of a given season), are not specific or informative enough to guide public health measures, or gain a thorough understanding of influenza vaccine effectiveness. In addition, the results are generally provided for specific population or individual seasons which limit the possibility to generalize or evaluate the results over multiple seasons.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) released a new guidance on influenza vaccines in 2017, removing the requirement to assess performance of influenza vaccines based on serological assays but instead requiring vaccine manufacturers to generate data from post-authorization effectiveness studies. Requesting effectiveness evaluation for all individual influenza vaccine brands commercialized in Europe, the EMA expected collaboration between public health institutions and vaccine manufacturers.

DRIVE seeks to establish a sufficiently sized network for robust, high quality, brand-specific effectiveness estimates for all influenza vaccines used in the European Union (EU) each season. In DRIVE, data from several independently operating national or regional study sites is analysed jointly to increase geographical coverage and sample size for brand-specific IVE estimates.

Set up in 2017, DRIVE is a unique European platform aiming to increase the understanding of brand-specific vaccine effectiveness (with initial focus on influenza vaccines).

1.2. Overall Project Objective

DRIVE seeks to establish a sufficiently sized network for robust, high quality, brand-specific effectiveness estimates for all influenza vaccines used in the European Union (EU) each season. In DRIVE, data from several independently operating national or regional study sites is analyzed jointly to increase geographical coverage and sample size for brand-specific IVE estimates.

To meet this objective, DRIVE has **developed a sustainable and transparent governance model** to allow the collaboration between the different stakeholders, through public-private partnership. This ultimately aims to building a sustainable study platform that is sufficiently sized to provide robust brand-specific vaccines effectiveness estimates that contribute to the decision making in Europe (further details of the governance model can be found at: https://www.drive-eu.org/index.php/governance/).
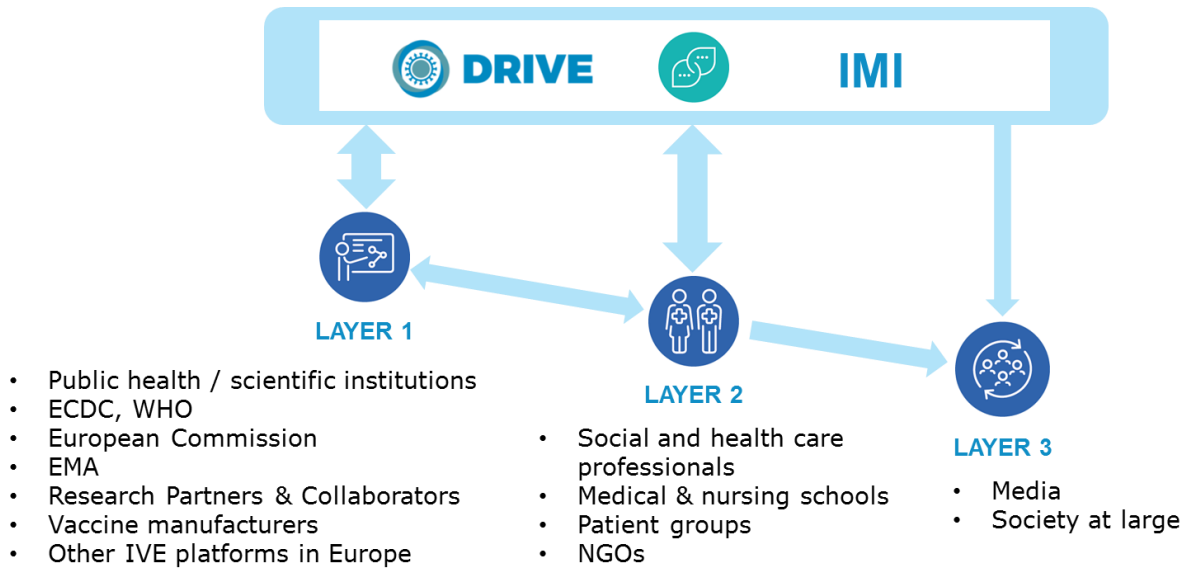
1.3. Target audiences

Image 1. DRIVE stakeholders

DRIVE provides outputs for several different stakeholders who need evidence on IVE to fulfil their statutory or other duties. Examples of these are public health institutes, vaccine manufacturers, national regulators, EMA, ECDC, and WHO.

The primary target group (Layer 1, Statutory Stakeholders) consists of the following:

- Public health / scientific institutions

- ECDC, WHO

- European Commission

- EMA

- Research Partners & Collaborators (existing and potential)

- Vaccine manufacturers

- Other IVE platforms in Europe (e.g. VAC4EU, I-Move)

The secondary target group (Layer 2, non-statutory stakeholders) includes:

- Social and health care professionals

- Medical & nursing schools

- Patient groups

- NGOs

Other target groups (Layer 3) include the media and society at large. Although ultimately the end-users of DRIVE data are European citizens and people living in Europe, they will not be addressed by DRIVE directly but by their national bodies and, to some extent, the media.

DRIVE is funded by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), a public-private partnership between the European Union and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA).

1.4. Communication goals

- To contribute to the European effort of raising awareness on the value of IVE assessment.

- To establish an authoritative and credible profile for DRIVE studies.

- To engage a wide range of stakeholder groups on the progress and results of DRIVE.

- To create scientific synergies with research group/communities and engage into new collaborations advocating for open data strategy (for further information please refer to: https://www.drive-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DRIVE_D1.1_Multistakeholder-Research-Agenda.pdf).

- To overcome Public Private Partnership (PPP) hesitancy and demonstrate that DRIVE governance model is a suitable approach to conduct brand specific VE studies – to highlight the values of PPP and the transparency of DRIVE studies.

1.5. Communications Strategy for 2021/2022

- Maximising the opportunities for partnerships and collaboration through annual study tenders, interaction with PHIs, workshops, research agenda etc.

- Fostering synergies and building upon a sustainable plan for DRIVE and post DRIVE landscape.

- Educating stakeholders on the nature and science of flu.

- Presenting the lessons learned from Public Private Partnership (PPP): Addressing the hurdles to PPP hesitancy with clear and transparent communication, feasibility (scientific, attracting partners to participate).

- Telling the DRIVE story from project initiation through achievements and successes to project end and beyond.

1.6. Key messages

- Influenza poses a major public health burden in Europe every year. Vaccines are the cornerstone of influenza disease prevention however their effectiveness can vary from year to year and across recipient groups.

- DRIVE is a PPP platform that aims to better evaluate the value of influenza vaccination in Europe.

- DRIVE aims to establish best practices to obtain comprehensive, scientifically robust vaccine effectiveness results within a PPP framework.

- DRIVE aims to share knowledge and insights, in a transparent, open and inclusive manner. Since launch, DRIVE has increased in size and number of collaborating partners by expanding the number of participating sites and vaccination registers.

- DRIVE offers a model of PPP that provides a foundation and guideline for the future of post-marketing monitoring of vaccine effectiveness and can be used to assess other vaccines (e.g. vaccines against SARS-CoV2).

- The DRIVE governance structure maximises scientific integrity, independence and transparency for all partners.

2. Communication Platforms

Communication channels, target audience and message frequency

- **DRIVE Annual Forum**

  - A public webinar to key stakeholders, organized once a year

  - Target audience: Layer 1, Layer 2

- **Other online events (webinars, workshops)**

  - Online workshops and webinars to key stakeholders on key topics as and when needed (may also be in the form of pre-recorded presentations available on DRIVE channels on-demand and promoted on social media, in the newsletter etc.)

  - E.g. on how to manage a PPP model, what are its benefits etc.

  - Target audiences: Layer 1, (Layer 2)

- **National and international events (workshops, conferences)**

  - Attendance at approx. 3 major ones per year (e.g. ESWI, ESPID, ESCAIDE, ECCMID, WCPH, International Influenza Meeting) and smaller ones as and when opportunity occurs

  - Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2

- **Communication with regulators**

  - A bi-annual meeting with relevant regulatory authorities (EMA/Vaccine Working Party, German Paul Ehrlich Institute "PEI")

  - Maintain close dialogue with regulators to ensure the project meet the regulatory expectations

  - Target audience: Layer 1

- **Peer reviewed journals**

  - As results become available

  - Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2

- **Digital marketing**

  - DRIVE website

    - Basic information about DRIVE, seasonal VE results, DRIVE public deliverables, news, annual call for tenders for new collaborators, info and updates on the DRIVE Governance Model etc. Possibly also introduce new types of content such as interviews and opinions of experts in 2021.

    - Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2; visible to but not tailored for Layer 3

  - Social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube)

    - As and when relevant to promote exciting development, to repeat DRIVE key messages, to keep DRIVE in the minds of stakeholders and to attract new research collaborators (appr. frequency 3–5 posts per week)

- - - - Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2, visible to Layer 3

  - o DRIVE Newsletter

    - ▪ Four per year (one in each quarter), highlighting DRIVE achievements, latest publications and upcoming events where DRIVE will be present

    - ▪ Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2

  - o Multimedia content

    - ▪ Videos

    - ▪ Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2, visible to Layer 3 via distribution channels (e.g. social media)

  - o Infographics

    - ▪ E.g. explaining the DRIVE Governance Model, annual call for tenders, VE studies/results etc.

    - ▪ Target audiences: Layer 1, Layer 2, visible to Layer 3 via distribution channels (e.g. social media)

- **Press releases (if feasible)**

  - o 1–2 per year, as and when relevant to promote exciting developments, e.g. publication of papers in peer reviewed journals

  - o Further discussion is required as to how this would be resourced and which media to target.

3. Communication activities by tasks for years 2021 and 2022

|		2021				2022	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
T5.1	Establish the procedures of external communication of DRIVE		Call for Tenders 2020/21				
T5.2	Establish two-way communication lines between DRIVE and the Layer 1 stakeholders	Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings	Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings	Annual Forum 2021 (1 or 2 events) Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings	Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings	Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings	Personal contacts, attending scientific meetings
T5.3	Establish tools for Layer 1 stakeholders			Executive summary and Lay summary 2020/21			
T5.4	Disseminate the study results gradually to Layer 1 and Layer 2 stakeholders	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 1/2021	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 2/2021	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 3/2021 Press release?	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 4/2021	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 1/2022	News articles on website / social media updates Newsletter 2/2022
T5.5	Disseminate information on knowledge gaps needing future R&D efforts arising from studies designed in DRIVE						
T5.6	Investigate among the stakeholders the value of the existing solutions						
T5.7	Development of synergies with related initiatives	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences	Participation in major scientific meetings/ conferences
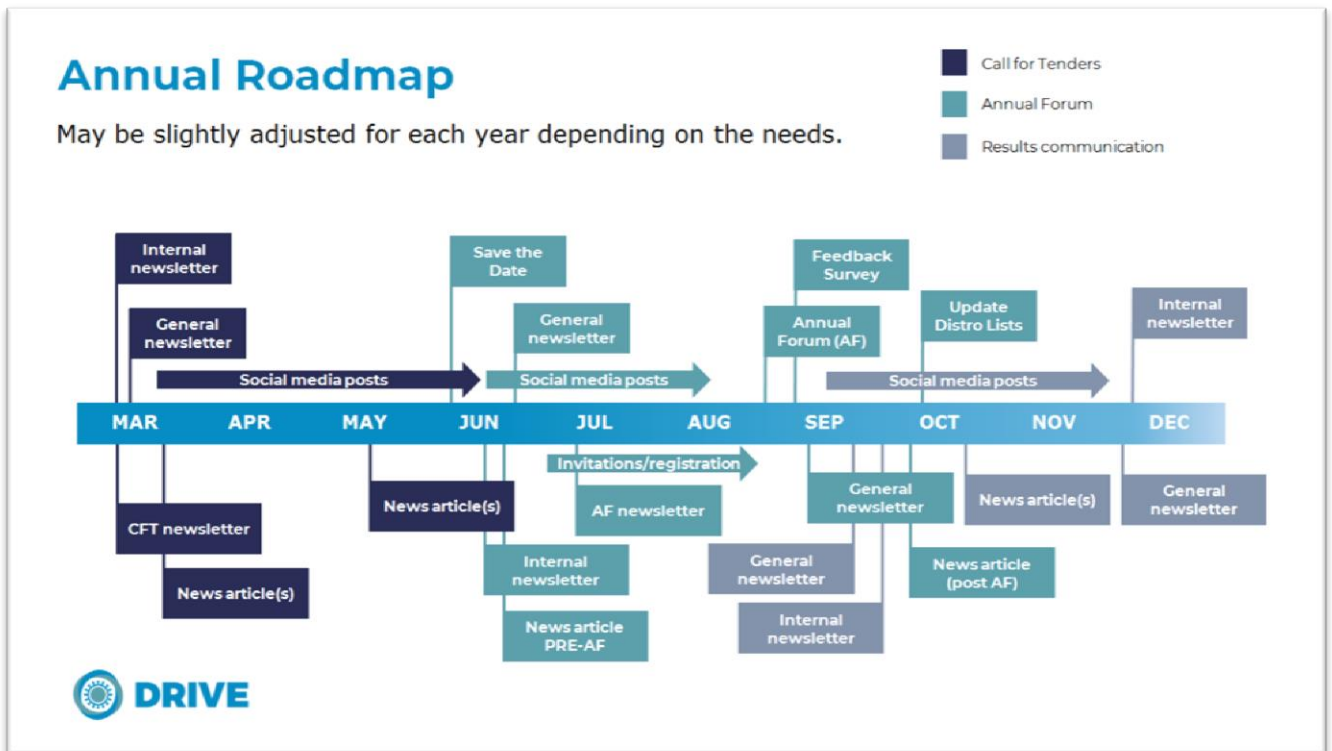
Image 2. Annual Roadmap for communicating key topics

4. Evaluation

The success of communication activities will be evaluated by e.g. measuring website traffic, social media activity, newsletter statistics, number of new partners attracted, consolidation, improvement and expansion of the DRIVE Network, etc. These analytics will be communicated on a yearly basis.

Surveys to collect feedback from different stakeholder groups will be conducted e.g. after the Annual Forum webinar.