

Expression of Interest – Maastricht University, Department of Family Medicine (July 2026)

TOPIC ID: HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-10

Interest in joining a consortium for Prevention and management of chronic non-communicable diseases in children and young people (GACD)

Dear reader,

On behalf of the **department of Family Medicine, at Maastricht University**, we would like to express our interest in joining a consortium for HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-10: Prevention and management of chronic non-communicable diseases in children and young people (GACD) under Horizon Europe.

This call closely aligns with our research that focuses on developing, evaluating and implementing complex interventions in routine healthcare using pragmatic clinical trials, mixed-methods research and co-design approaches. We are expanding our research program towards mental health trajectories across prevention and primary care, with increasing **attention to children and young people and the early prevention of chronic conditions**.

We are interested in participating as **a project partner or a work package leader**, depending on the needs of the consortium.

1. Expertise

Our core expertise includes:

- **Effectiveness testing in real-world settings**, e.g. pragmatic clinical trials, as well as **implementation science** including process evaluations, use of different healthcare implementation frameworks, and the evaluation of implementation outcomes in routine healthcare.
- **Behavioural interventions, mental health promotion and prevention**, with expertise in co-design, patient-centred care, communication, behaviour change and the implementation of preventive interventions in primary care, including an emerging research focus on children and young people.
- **Real-world evaluation using mixed-methods research and routine healthcare data**, including qualitative research, stakeholder engagement, electronic health records analysis, and implementation research to better understand intervention effectiveness, equity and long-term adoption.

This expertise is relevant to the expected activities of the call. We can contribute to the co-design, implementation and evaluation of interventions that promote the early prevention and timely identification of chronic conditions in children and young people.

2. Relevant track record and projects

We have relevant experience in implementation research, behavioural interventions and prevention, including:

- **GPS-AD trial (2025–2029)** – Pragmatic cluster randomised trial evaluating collaborative primary care for antidepressant deprescribing, with a strong focus on implementation, behavioural interventions and stakeholder engagement. Funded by KCE Trials Program (Belgium – € 1.14M).
- **Big Bird trial (2018–2022)** – Pragmatic cluster randomised trial evaluating blended care to discontinue long-term benzodiazepine receptor agonist use in primary care, including process evaluation and implementation research. Funded by KCE Trials Program (Belgium – €2.2M). Superiority of intervention not established.

- **Exhale project** – Which is primarily a co-design and implementation project focused on providing clean cookstoves in a rural area in India to reduce COPD and health risks in the entire family. We are broadening our horizons to also study the impact on children's learning development and psychosocial wellbeing.
- **Registry-based studies** – Using routinely collected primary care electronic health record data to investigate mental health, prescribing patterns and long-term healthcare outcomes.
- **Co-design and qualitative implementation studies** – Investigating patient and healthcare professional experiences, behavioural determinants and strategies to optimise implementation of complex healthcare interventions.

3. Data, infrastructure, technology, or pilots

We also have access to a primary care research network and implementation infrastructures, including the Dutch Academic Collaborative Consortium ("Academische Werkplaats Horizon"), which could strengthen the consortium's real-world relevance and long term impact.

More specifically, we can contribute:

- **Data:** longitudinal primary care electronic health records data, registry data, patient-reported outcomes and qualitative data;
- **Technology or tools:** expertise in implementation frameworks (including the Theoretical Domains Framework), mixed-methods evaluation, behavioural intervention design, co-design methodologies and implementation strategies;
- **Infrastructure:** the Dutch Academic Collaborative Consortium ("Academische Werkplaats Horizon"), primary care research networks, and strong collaborations with healthcare professionals, researchers and other stakeholders in the Netherlands, Ethiopia, and India.
- **Pilots:** implementation and evaluation of interventions in routine primary care, including stakeholder engagement, co-design and real-world implementation studies.

Contact

We would be pleased to discuss how our expertise and assets could complement your consortium for **HORIZON-HLTH-2027-01-DISEASE-10 Prevention and management of chronic non-communicable diseases in children and young people (GACD)**.

Please reach out by email and include the Horizon Europe contact of our local Grants Office in CC (i.beeren@maastrichtuniversity.nl).

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