



ECHO Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Office of the Secretariat

Barcelona, Spain

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From the Secretary General

In April of 2018, the Board of the European Children's Hospitals Organisation charged the Secretariat with drafting a strategic plan to help chart the course for ECHO over the next three years. This is a critical time for ECHO as we begin growing our membership beyond the initial founders and making our debut into European policy circles. Now more than ever, strong alignment around our mission and clear agreement on our next steps is essential for our success.

ECHO represents an important and new opportunity to build and support ties between the people and hospitals that care for children in Europe. This strategic plan reflects both the practical needs of a new organisation as well as the aspirational goals we have set for ourselves. It will help us meet the needs of our current members while also positioning them to meet tomorrow's challenges.

I believe deeply in the power of children's hospitals to improve child health and create healthier families and communities. We hope that implementing our strategic plan will guide ECHO in unleashing that power by targeting our efforts and maximizing available resources to ensure the seed we have planted with ECHO takes roots and grows.



Ruben Diaz
ECHO Secretary General
October 2018

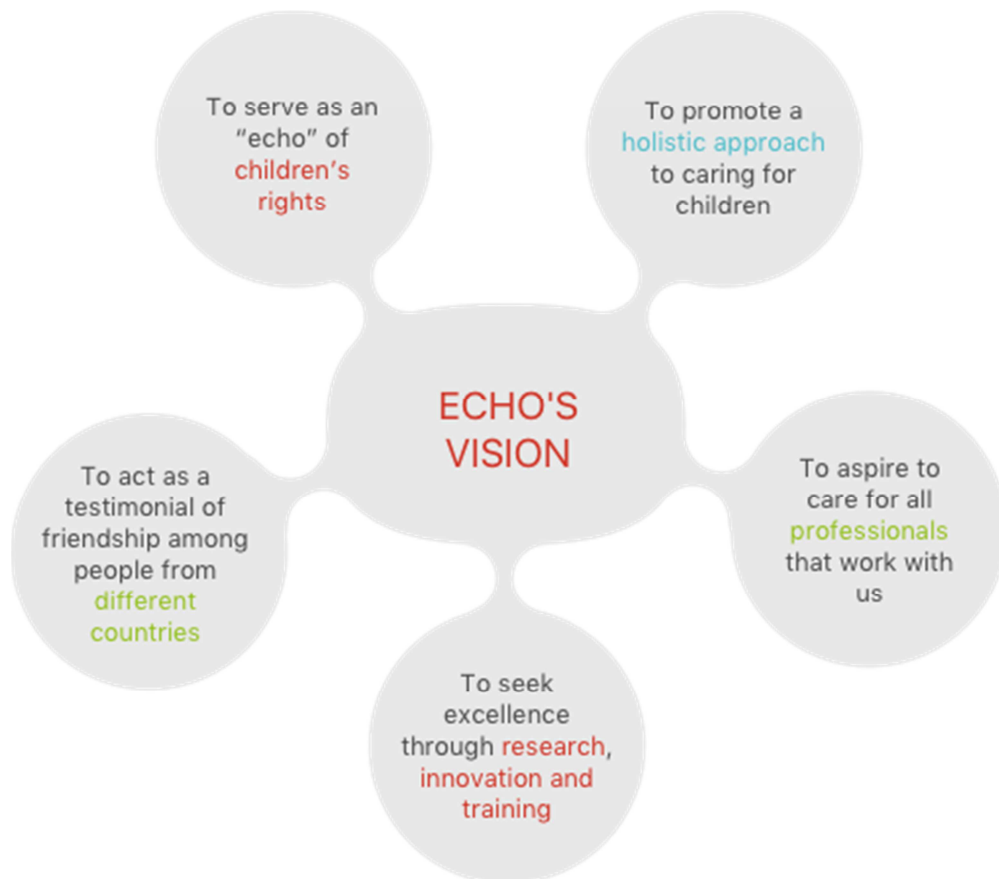
Our Mission

ECHO advocates for children’s health and their access to the best quality care through the collaborative work of children’s hospitals.



Our Vision

ECHO’s vision is to be a united voice of children’s hospitals promoting children’s rights, holistic care for patients, professional excellence, and friendship among people of different countries.



Our Journey

ECHO's roots

ECHO is grounded in the belief that we are stronger together and that the future of healthcare lies in teamwork and collaborative action. Equally important in the founding of ECHO was the recognition that children's hospitals play a singular role in our respective health care systems, and that children face unique health challenges not always recognized or prioritized by larger health policy initiatives.

The creation of ECHO was also spurred by the fact that although children's hospitals operate in different markets with distinct cultures, incentives, and organizational structures, they also face similar challenges. These include an increased emphasis on the need to produce value, increasingly complex patients and technologies, challenges in monitoring and evaluation, and the need for increased research and innovation focused on children and their care in hospital.

Children's hospitals operate in different markets with distinct cultures but face similar challenges.

With these common challenges in mind and a desire to improve the health of children across Europe, a small group of leaders from four children's hospitals sat down to map out what would become the European Children's Hospitals Organisation.



Signing of founding ECHO agreement at Meyer Children's Hospital in Florence. Italy on May 22, 2017

Our evolution

2016: The concept of ECHO came into being at a small meeting of four of the founding ECHO members in London at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. Later that year at Sant Joan de Déu Barcelona Children's hospital, the decision was made to move forward with formally organizing ECHO.

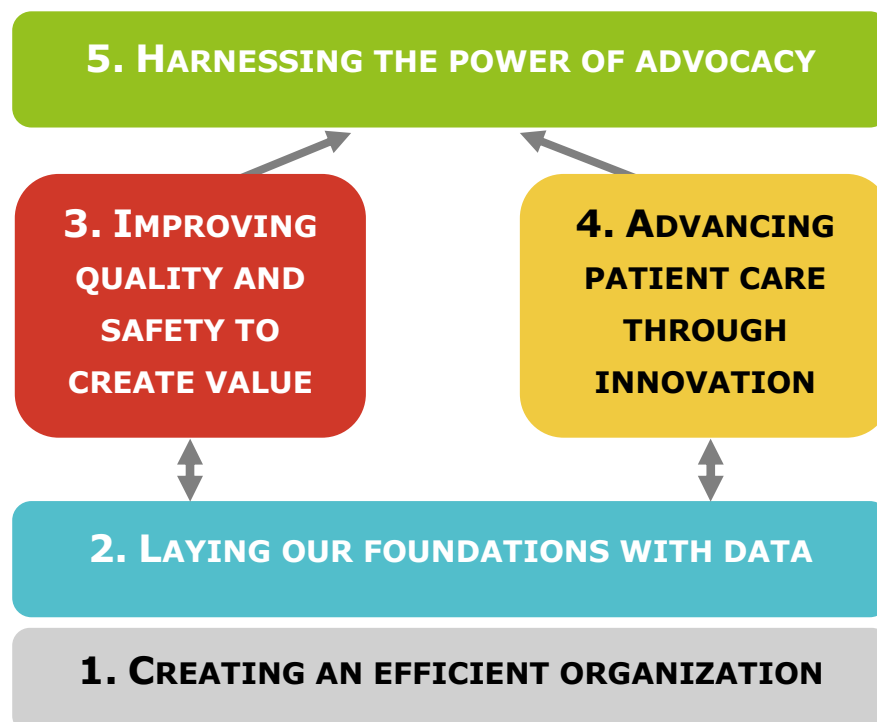
2017: The first official ECHO meeting was held in Florence at Meyer Children's Hospital where seven hospitals signed a memorandum of understanding officially constituting ECHO.

2018: The task of creating an organisational structure and establishing working groups began, with a work plan approved at the ECHO Board meeting in Paris at Necker Hospital for Sick Children. During this year membership also grows to ten children's hospitals

Our Plan

To set the best course for ECHO and ensure our members are positioned to provide the highest quality care to the children they serve, our strategic framework focuses on five interrelated lines.

ECHO's strategic lines 2018-2021



Appendix 1 provides information on the research and analysis that informed ECHO's strategic framework.

1. CREATING AN EFFICIENT ORGANISATION

Priority: We will create an organizational structure that maximizes ECHO's capacity to achieve its mission.

Objective: Develop an organizational structure that is sustainable, promotes networking and collaboration, that produces results, and is responsive to member needs.

Critical Issue: *How will ECHO create alignment and stimulate participation amongst members to maximize the effectiveness of the network?*

2018

- Streamline reporting and decision making procedures

2019

- Establish networking and communication channels for members

Critical Issue: *How will ECHO create a sustainable financial structure to support current and future activities?*

2020

- Diversify revenue streams to include grant funding for specific projects

2021

- Expand ECHO Board to a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 16

2. LAYING OUR FOUNDATIONS WITH DATA

Priority: We will create a data gathering and analysis infrastructure necessary to support current and future ECHO initiatives.

Objective: Provide high quality, relevant comparative data about the paediatric population ECHO's members serve, the characteristics and capacity of paediatric hospitals, the services they provide and the clinical results they obtain.

Critical Issue: *How will ECHO create a data set to describe and compare the infrastructure, resources, and clinical activities of our members?*

2019

- Administer biennial survey for comparative analysis and benchmarking between members
- Analyse and compare resource allocation, clinical operations and quality/outcomes data for at least one group of diseases that have readily available outcomes data to facilitate benchmarking

2020

- Create a database of quantitative activity and operational parameters linked to a standardized case-mix for each ECHO member
- Standardize diagnostic criteria and define extractable operational parameters for each participating member
- Periodical reporting of activity linked to diagnostic criteria standardized to paediatric parameters

3. IMPROVING QUALITY AND SAFETY TO CREATE VALUE

Priority: We will measure quality, outcomes and value to improve the delivery of safe, effective and efficient care.

Objective: Foster collaborative initiatives that are aimed at measuring and benchmarking outcomes to reduce variability and improve performance in clinical care.

Critical issue: *How can ECHO members collaborate to measure outcomes and increase value?*

2018

- Establish a working group that brings clinical and managerial expertise in the area of quality and outcomes
- Define strategy for working group and implement feasible collaborative initiatives to benchmark outcomes

**2019 TO
2021**

- Implement a minimum of one collaborative initiative with short- and intermediate-term results
- Constitute a working group composed of representatives from ECHO members in identified areas of common interest (e.g. rare diseases or critical care)
- Identify best practices in relevant clinical areas not currently well defined (e.g. transition care)
- Issue one consensus statement yearly in an area of clinical or operational interest

4. ADVANCING PATIENT CARE THROUGH INNOVATION

Priority: We will potentiate member's ability to individually or collectively develop and implement innovative practices.

Objective: Establish ECHO as the "go-to" source for innovation in paediatric hospitals.

Critical issue: *How will ECHO uniquely contribute to innovation in children's hospitals?*

2019

- Convene working group of innovation leaders to further define ECHO innovation strategy
- Develop and publish consensus statement targeted at policy makers identifying what is needed to support innovation in pediatric hospitals.

**2020 TO
2021**

- Create mechanism (virtual, in-person, or both) for members to share ideas, infrastructure, and organizational strategies related to innovation
- Implement exchange of staff to share best practices

5. HARNESSING THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

Priority: Communicate and advocate for the value of children's hospitals.

Objective: Cultivate the ECHO brand as a relevant and trustworthy resource on hospital care for children.

Critical issue: *How can ECHO communicate its value and generate grass roots support amongst academicians and clinical leaders?*

**2018 TO
2020**

- Identify a maximum of two lines of work with potential for publication or dissemination in a peer reviewed context for ECHO to focus on
- Present at targeted conferences and publish in at least one peer reviewed journal

Critical issue: *How can ECHO best communicate the current value of children's hospitals to national and European policy makers?*

**2019 TO
2021**

- Begin developing relationships with key European Commission staff and Council members who have the potential to influence programs, policies and funding streams impacting children's hospitals
- Establish a clear role for ECHO in the European Reference Networks.
- Continually identify and form strategic partnerships with pan-European

Appendix I

Steps leading to ECHO's Strategic Framework

Market analysis: First, we assessed the geographic scope and potential member base.

Stakeholder analysis: Second, we analysed priorities of agencies within the European Commission, the needs of current and future members, and potential impact on patients.

Benchmarking of similar organisations: Next, the priorities, work line, and strategic goals of organisations related to ECHO were assessed to identify synergies and to also pinpoint the unique offering of ECHO.

Organisations reviewed included:

- Children's hospital organisations
- General hospital organisations
- Organisations addressing specific issues targeted by ECHO
- Professional Associations
- Intergovernmental Organisations
- Non-Governmental Organisations

Topic specific review: Finally, additional topics that had previously been identified as priorities by ECHO but that were not fully developed in the initial external scan were further investigated. These included:

- Training and workforce development
- Research and innovation

Internal Analysis: An internal analysis evaluated ECHO's organisational structure, current activities, and economic resources.

ECHO Governance and Organizational Structure

