

Center for Medical Micronutrient Supplementation

April 5 2022

Roland de Wolf

Idelette Nutma

Gaston Remmers

Reindert Graaff

Manfred Eggersdorfer

Chaja Hudepol

Philosophy and purpose

The usefulness and necessity of supplementing micronutrients in the acute phase of a serious illness have been investigated in many studies*. A group of scientists, physicians and patients believe that the clinical application of these results will make important contributions to improving the clinical outcome and preventing serious residual damage in the longer term, which occurs over the course of the disease in the acute phase.

Inspired by this, a collaboration of international experts and patient and citizen health organizations was initiated.

The aim of the group is to advocate for supplementation and/or therapeutic use of these micronutrients in point-of-care facilities. We aim to stimulate further research on this topic and the translation into applications. To achieve these two goals, different methods can be used.

The center is internationally oriented and gathers round table members working in various countries all over the globe. For the scientific reviews, international papers are considered. Furthermore, the center supports similar initiatives in other countries.

** See 'Role of micronutrients for patients in the acute phase of critical illness – Background document' for more information on the scientific background.*

Methods

To achieve the aims of the group, actions can be undertaken centered around four themes: Information Gathering, Outreach and Advice, Promoting Collaboration, and Promoting Research.

Information gathering

Experts in the field are regularly approached to take part as members of the round table. During these discussions, expertise can be exchanged, and the core members of the center can be updated on the latest developments in research and patient experiences. Additionally, these experts increase the impact of our group: by giving advice on the work that is made public, by backing the letters that are sent to the government or other organizations, or by spreading our message through their network.

Outreach and advise

This second theme is centered around the advisory role. The group wishes to supply relevant organizations (including the government) with solicited and unsolicited advice regarding the use of micronutrients in the acute phase. In the past this has been done by writing letters and literature reviews, which were sent to the Dutch Ministry of Health, the FMS and the SWAB, among others.

It is hoped that in the future, as this center evolves into an institute, the focus will shift from more broad unsolicited advice to more topic-specific solicited advice.

Promoting collaboration

Promotion of collaboration between medical associations and patient representatives is theme to incorporate different perspectives. This includes contacting experts to find new possibilities for patient representatives and scientists to design research together. Furthermore, this collaboration wants to pave the way for more discussion about goals and ethics, and bringing scientific knowledge, experience, and values together.

Promoting research

By promotion of further research, the center hopes to contribute to a lasting change in the field of micronutrients. We expect that by connecting researchers with patient representatives and finance options, studies will be designed that serve both the patient needs and the scientific knowledge base, including citizen science, on which new legislative choices can be made. By simultaneously stimulating the societal debate on this topic, hopefully more attention will be given to this field in the future.

Levels of involvement

The core group currently consists of Reindert Graaff, Gaston Remmers, Idelette Nutma, Roland de Wolf, Manfred Eggersdorfer, and Chaja Hudepol. This group is actively working on spreading the philosophy through various channels, such as letters to the government, and contact with the media. Those that are interested in joining this center, can choose between different levels of involvement.

Sphere one consists of members of the round table group, who wish to be actively involved in these processes, e.g. by giving suggestions on the work that is being done, sharing the work through their channels, and signing the documents that are written.

Sphere two is a solution for those members of the round table that want to be involved in the process, but do not feel comfortable being an active advocate. We do appreciate the valuable input we receive from this group and will not put these RT members on the spot by asking them to publicly support the group.

Based on the subject that the core group is working on, round table members can inform us how closely they wish to be involved, as this can vary per subject, based on their expertise. If a member wishes to continuously be involved as a sphere one or sphere two member, or wishes to not being involved anymore in general, they can contact the core group.

Through the Center of Medical Micronutrient Supplementation, we hope to increase interest in the value of micronutrients for a better quality of life for patients. If you wish to become involved, you can reach out to us.