



**Instytut Kardiologii**  
IM. PRYMASA TYSIĄCLECIA  
STEFANA KARDYNAŁA WYSZYŃSKIEGO

## **Human Resources Excellence in Research**

Self-evaluation report and action plan for the period 2017 – 2020



**Contents**

- 1. INTRODUCTION..... 3
- 2. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY ..... 8
  - 2.1. Declaration of support for the Charter and the Code..... 8
  - 2.2. Creation of a Working Group ..... 8
  - 2.3. Internal analysis of national legislation and institutional documentation..... 9
  - 2.4. Survey ..... 11
  - 2.5. Survey Structure ..... 12
- 3. RESULTS OF INTERNAL ANALYSIS ..... 12
  - 3.1. Research freedom ..... 14
  - 3.2. Ethical principles ..... 15
  - 3.3. Professional responsibility ..... 15
  - 3.4. Professional attitude..... 16
  - 3.5. Contractual and legal obligations ..... 17
  - 3.6. Accountability..... 18
  - 3.7. Good practice in research ..... 19
  - 3.8. Dissemination and exploitation of results..... 19
  - 3.9. Public engagement..... 20
  - 3.10. Non discrimination ..... 21
  - 3.11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems ..... 21
  - 3.12. Recruitment..... 22
  - 3.13. Recruitment (Code) ..... 23
  - 3.14. Selection (Code) ..... 24
  - 3.15. Transparency (Code) ..... 24
  - 3.16. Judging merit (Code) ..... 25
  - 3.17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)..... 25
  - 3.18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)..... 26
  - 3.19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)..... 27
  - 3.20. Seniority (Code)..... 27
  - 3.21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)..... 28
  - 3.22. Recognition of the profession..... 28
  - 3.23. Research environment ..... 29
  - 3.24. Working conditions ..... 30
  - 3.25. Stability and permanence of employment ..... 30
  - 3.26. Funding and salaries ..... 31
  - 3.27. Gender balance ..... 32
  - 3.28. Career development..... 33
  - 3.29. Value of mobility..... 33
  - 3.30. Access to career advice..... 34
  - 3.31. Intellectual Property Rights ..... 35
  - 3.32. Co-authorship ..... 36
  - 3.33. Teaching ..... 37
  - 3.34. Complains/ appeals..... 37
  - 3.35. Participation in decision-making bodies..... 38
  - 3.36. Relation with supervisors ..... 38
  - 3.37. Supervision and managerial duties ..... 39
  - 3.38. Continuing Professional Development ..... 40
  - 3.39. Access to research training and continuous development ..... 40
  - 3.40. Supervision ..... 41
- 4. Conclusion..... 42
- 5. SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN ..... 43

**The aim of the Charter and Code is to ensure equal rights and obligations for researchers through 40 principles about ethical and professional aspects of their work, recruitment, working conditions, social security and training. On the one hand, the principles in the Charter specify the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers, on the other hand specify roles, responsibilities and entitlements of employers and/or founders of researchers. The principles of the Charter and Code provide guidelines to which research institution try to align their policies and practice. The Institute of Cardiology makes every effort to ensure that its activities reflect a respect for the law, ethical principles and good practices.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Institute of Cardiology (IKARD) was established in 1979 and now is the main Polish clinical center of cardiology and cardiac surgery with the highest reference score. Being a dynamically developing academic and research center, it plays an important role in postgraduate training and education in cardiology.

For years, the Institute has been in the forefront of best Polish institutions of that type. Very high quality and availability of highly specialized medical procedures contributes directly to this achievement.

The clinical activity in the Institute focuses on interventional treatment of acute coronary syndromes, diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery disease and cardiac insufficiency as well as acquired and congenital heart defects. The clinical activity also includes diagnosing and treating arterial hypertension and arrhythmia. The procedures performed at the Institute include cardiac surgery and heart transplantation as well as imaging diagnostics.

During the 37 years of its existence, the Institute has contributed to the development of Polish cardiology and cardiac surgery by initiating and propagating numerous new methods of treatment and by educating and training specialists in cardiology. Of particular importance is the role played by the Institute as the country pioneer in introducing and propagating new methods of cardiac diagnosis and treatment. All main innovative interventional methods of non-surgical cardiac therapy now used in Poland have been introduced by the Institute of Cardiology specialists.

The Institute of Cardiology is the dominating cardiology center in the region. In some fields of cardiology and cardiac surgery, it is virtually the only center performing highly specialized life-

saving procedures in cardiac patients 24 hours a day.

The Institute provides 24 hour/7 days a week readiness to treat emergency patients in the region who need either cardiac or cardiosurgical interventions. These range from interventional treatment of arrhythmia to aortic aneurysm surgery and heart transplantations.

The Institute has 386 beds in its clinics and wards on Alpejska Street and on Spartańska Street.

The yearly activity of the Institute looks as follows:

- over 19400 patients hospitalized,
- over 2000 surgeries,
- over 49800 out-patients,
- over 8800 procedures performed by the hemodynamic lab,
- over 28800 imaging examinations done by the Radiology Department,
- over 2400 procedures performed by the Clinical Electrophysiology Lab.

The structure of IKARD includes: Department of Interventional Cardiology and Angiology (Head: Prof. Adam Witkowski, MD), Department of Coronary and Structural Heart Diseases (Head: Prof. Marcin Demkow, MD), 2nd Department of Coronary Artery Disease (Head: Prof. Hanna Szwed, MD), Department of Hypertension Clinic (Head: Prof. Andrzej Januszewicz, MD), Intensive Cardiac Therapy (Head: Prof. Janina Stępińska, MD), Department of Congenital Cardiac Defects (Head: Prof. Piotr Hoffman, MD), Department of Acquired Cardiac Defects (Head: Assoc. Prof. Tomasz Hryniewiecki, MD), Department of Heart Failure and Transplantology (Head: Prof. Tomasz Zieliński, MD), Department of Arrhythmia (Head: Prof. Łukasz Szumowski, MD), Department of Cardiosurgery and Transplantology (Head: Prof. Mariusz Kuśmierczyk MD), Department and Clinic of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Noninvasive Electrocardiology (Head: Prof. Ryszard Piotrowicz, MD), Department of Cardiomyopathy (Head: Assoc. Prof. Jacek Grzybowski, MD), Emergency Ward (Head: Piotr Michałek, MD), Unit for Screening Studies in Inherited Cardiovascular Diseases (Head: Prof. Zofia Bilińska, MD), Department of Epidemiology, Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (Head: Prof. Wojciech Drygas, MD), Department of Medical Biology (Head: Prof. Anna Lutyńska, MD)

The Institute governance includes a Director, four Deputy Directors and the Scientific Board acting as a supervision authority.

There is an Ethics Committee operating within the Institute. The Committee focuses on presenting opinions on research projects with human participants, in which personal data is

used; research projects conducted on biological material taken from humans, which may involve risk for physical or mental health of participants and risk of violating privacy of the participants or the risk of sustaining social or privacy loss; experimental research, observation, survey and other non-invasive projects.

The Institute of Cardiology employs 1,300 staff members. Apart from scientific staff, these are, non – scientific employees including physicians, nurses, technical and administration staff.

The Institute of Cardiology scientific staff consists of: 9 Professors, 24 Associate Professors, 19 Adjuncts and 3 Assistants. In addition the Institute leads a residency program with currently 60 residents.

Each year, the Institute implements new research projects, majority of which are funded with statutory subsidies but also with the National Science Centre and the National Centre for Research and Development. In 2016 the Institute conducted 11 projects granted by the National Science Centre and Ministry of Science and Higher Education, 2 projects granted by the National Centre for Research and Development and 5 projects co financed by European Union funds. The research personnel were also involved in several international projects on the basis of consortium agreements.

The main scientific development fields of interest of the Institute of Cardiology are:

#### 1. Molecular mechanisms of cardiovascular diseases

The research programs focus on (among others):

- Detecting mutations in patients with cardiomyopathies, secondary hypertension;
- Assessing polymorphisms of known genes in premature atherosclerosis in women, in cardiomyopathies, and severe heart failure;
- Analyzing explanted heart tissue in dilated and ischemic cardiomyopathies.

#### 2. Coronary artery disease

The research mainly focuses on:

- Studies on the vulnerable atherosclerotic plaque;
- Therapeutic angiogenesis with the use genes for VEGF and FGF administered subcutaneously in 'no option patients';
- Assessing the efficacy and safety of using intracoronary autologous bone marrow transplantations in treating patients with early post-infarction left ventricular dysfunction;
- Influenza vaccination in acute cardiac event prevention.

### 3. Finding and verifying new methods for noninvasive diagnostics of heart diseases

The main interests include:

- Using modern echocardiographic techniques and technologies in the diagnosis and quantitative evaluation of primary and secondary myocardium pathologies;
- Assessing the sensitivity and specificity of 64-slice CT scans in noninvasive coronarography in patients with acquired valvular diseases qualified for surgical repair;
- Assessing the usefulness of the Doppler method to visualize the renal arteries and abdominal aorta in patients who have undergone a surgical repair for Type-A aortic dissection.

### 4. Electrophysiological studies and non-pharmacological treatment of arrhythmia

Our researchers focus on:

- Identifying mechanisms and factors predisposing patients to focal atrial fibrillation;
- Improving the methods of diagnostics and electrotherapy of supraventricular and ventricular arrhythmias;
- Evaluating the natural history in patients with recurrent tachyarrhythmia;
- Preparing optimal methods of qualifying for and evaluating the efficacy of the resynchronizing stimulation therapy.

### 5. Acquired and congenital heart disease

Research is mainly focused on:

- Interventional treatment of congenital and acquired heart disease;
- Importance of biomarkers in monitoring acquired heart disease;
- Evaluating methods of molecular biology in diagnostics of infective endocarditis.

### 6. Heart failure

Research programs mainly focus on:

- Improving care for patients with severe heart failure, and assessing and optimizing indications for heart transplantation;
- Treating severe heart failure with artificial heart ventricles;
- Treating post-infarction left ventricle aneurysms
- Importance of biomarkers in patients with severe heart failure;
- Dilated cardiomyopathy etiopathogenesis.

### 7. Arterial hypertension

Research is mainly focused on:

- High-specialty diagnostics of secondary arterial hypertension;

- Follow-up hypertensive patients who have undergone repair surgery for thoracic aortic dissection;
- Assessing the clinical significance of blood pressure changes measured non-invasively;
- Assessing the clinical significance of sleep disturbances in hypertensive patients and how these disturbances coincide with blood pressure changes.

## 8. Cardiac surgery

Research programs mainly focus on:

- Treating valvular disease by implanting non-stent valves and homografts;
- Minimally invasive treatment of coronary artery disease;
- Surgical treatment of aorta diseases (hybrid surgery);
- Assessing how brain oxygenation influences the neurological condition of patients who have undergone cardiac surgery;
- Analyzing quality of life of patients after surgery for congenital heart disease.

## 9. Epidemiology, health promotion and cardiologic rehabilitation

Research studies include:

- Evaluating the knowledge, attitude and skills of health professionals (including nurses) in health promotion, cardiovascular diseases prevention;
- Monitoring determinants of cardiovascular diseases, how well they are controlled, and their time trends; coincidence with morbidity and mortality;
- Prevalence of cardiovascular disease classic and new risk factors in Polish population;
- Applying telemedicine in cardiac diagnostics and rehabilitation;
- Adjusting the form of physical training to therapy progress (primary angioplasty, cardioverter-defibrillator, synchronic therapy);
- Non-invasive evaluation of the autonomic system as the indicator of complex cardiologic rehabilitation efficacy.

## **2. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Declaration of support for the Charter and the Code**

On April 17th, 2015 the Director of the Institute signed the Declaration of endorsement of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Institute of Cardiology to The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, which created an obligation for the Management to undertake efforts towards obtaining the HR Logo Excellence in Research.

### **2.2. Creation of a Working Group**

To conduct an internal analysis of the Institute's operations and develop strategy for remedial actions the Director of IKARD has appointed a Working Group. Its members were appointed among both the researchers (including the Director for Research) and the administrative staff who support scientists in their professional development and research:

- Piotr Szymański, Research Director (coordination)
- Zofia Bilińska, Head of Unit for Screening Studies in Inherited Cardiovascular Diseases
- Kamila Bis, Head of Planning and Administration of Science Unit
- Rafał Dąbrowski, 2nd Department of Coronary Artery Disease, Head of the Education and Training Committee
- Zofia Dzielińska, Deputy Director for Clinical Affairs
- Maciej Grabowski, Department of Acquired Cardiac Defects
- Andrzej Januszewicz, Chairperson of The Scientific Board
- Cezary Kępka, Scientific Coordinator
- Małgorzata Korzenecka, Human Resources Unit
- Katarzyna Kozar-Kamińska, Department of Medical Biology
- Aleksandra Pajor, Head of Research Programs and Clinical Trials Unit
- Małgorzata Rowicka, Head of Human Resources Unit
- Jerzy Pręgowski, Department of Interventional Cardiology and Angiology
- Tomasz Zieliński, Chairperson of The Ethic Committee



Representatives of R1 (First Stage Researchers) were consulted additionally. Early stage researchers gave comments on their situation and problems in the on-line questionnaire. The Working Group analyzed all remarks and proposals concerning early stage researchers and the conclusions were included in the final version of the HR Strategy.

### **2.3. Internal analysis of national legislation and institutional documentation**

The Working Group has collected and analyzed the legislation, procedures and operational practices in force at IKARD against the Charter&Code principles. The following acts were taken into consideration:

#### **National level legislation**

1. Act on Research Institutes (Journal of Laws of 2010 No. 96, item 618, as amended)
2. The Law on Health Care Activities (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 618, as amended)
3. The Law on Health Care Services Financed from Public Funds (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 581, as amended)
4. Pharmaceutical Law (Journal of Laws of 2008 No. 45, item 271, as amended)
5. Public Procurement Law  
(Journal of Laws of 2015, item 2164, and of 2016, items 831 and 996)
6. The Act on the Principles of Financing Science (Journal of Laws of 2010 No. 96, item 615, as amended)
7. The Act on the Profession of a Physician and a Dentist  
(Journal of Laws No. 58, item 351 and of 2009 No. 40, item 323)
8. The Act of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and academic title and degrees and title in art (Journal of Laws of 2003 No. 65, item 595, as amended)
9. Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on detailed procedure and conditions of execution of activities under procedures of conferment of the academic degree of doktor (doctor), doktor habilitowany (habilitated doctor), and academic title of profesor (professor)  
(Journal of Laws of 2015, item 1842).
10. Law on Higher Education (Journal of Laws of 2005 No. 164, item 1365, as amended)
11. The Civil Code (Journal of Laws of 2016, item 380)
12. The Labour Code (Journal of Laws of 1998 No. 21, item 94, as amended)
13. The Act on Trade Unions (Journal of Laws of 2001 No. 79, item 854, as amended)
14. The Act on Company Social Benefits Fund (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 111)

15. Act on special rules on termination of employment for reasons not attributable to employees (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 192)
16. Act of 4 February 1994 on *copyright* and related *rights* (Journal of Laws of 1994 No. 24, item 83)
17. The Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 8 September 2016 on detailed criteria and procedure of granting and settling funds for activities aimed at popularising science. (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1620)
18. The Regulation of the Minister of Health of 2 May 2012 on Good Clinical Practice (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 489)

### **Internal regulations**

1. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on appointment of the Field Bioethics Commission.
2. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the Regulations of the Field Bioethics Commission.
3. Detailed procedure of execution of activities under procedures of conferment of the academic degree of doktor (doctor), doktor habilitowany (habilitated doctor), and academic title of profesor (professor) in the Institute of Cardiology.
4. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the rules of justification of absence due to business/reaserch travel and improvement of skills.
5. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on introduction of the Instruction concerning principles of conduct with regard to the procedure and conditions of preparing and submitting works financed from funds for maintenance of research potential.
6. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on introduction of the regulations concerning assessment of scientific, research and technical staff employed at the Institute of Cardiology.
7. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on introduction of the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology.
8. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on introduction of Code of Ethics for Employees.
9. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the implementation of the policy statement in the field of the mode and conditions of preparation and reporting of the work financed from the resources for the maintenance of the research potential.

10. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on a reward for the publication of original research papers.
11. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the financial resources to cover the costs of domestic and foreign trips and the costs of publication.
12. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the granting employees Awards Director of the Institute of Cardiology
13. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on Information regarding methods of prevention of discrimination, harassment and lobbying.
14. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on appointment of Administrator of Information Security at the Institute of Cardiology.
15. The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on introduction of Organisational Regulations of the Institute of Cardiology.
16. Constitution of the Institute of Cardiology
17. Corporate Collective Labour Agreement
18. Work regulations of the Institute of Cardiology
19. Code of conduct with regard to scientific staff recruitment
20. P-304 procedure — Management of Human Resources of Quality Management System.
21. The Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology.

#### **2.4. Survey**

As a part of consultations in the process of preparation of the Internal Gap Analysis for the HR Excellence in Research an anonymous survey was carried out among IKARD employees in October 2016. Each respondent was sent an email with a link to the questionnaire website. The participation was voluntary, the timeframe given to submit responses was one week. In March 2017 after the experts' recommendations on-line survey was redistributed among researchers (levels R1 to R4) in order to secure the highest feedback possible. The questionnaire was filled in by 51 researchers, which constitutes 93% of scientific staff asked to answer the survey. Young researchers were additionally consulted and gave they opinion and remarks.

## 2.5. Survey Structure

The questionnaire was divided into four sections; ethical and professional aspects, recruitment and selection, working conditions and social security, training and development. Respondents were asked to provide replies based on a five-point scale, where one stood for a very negative assessment and five meant a very positive assessment. Therefore, each time when average assessments of a given issue are compared, value 3.5 or more stands for a rather positive assessment and values below 3.5 stand for negative assessments.

## 3. RESULTS OF INTERNAL ANALYSIS

The staff opinion survey and the internal gap analysis revealed areas for enhancements. Four areas was scored below 3,5 and three equal to 3,5 points. In this areas existing practice or policy should be improved. The Action Plan also includes activities for areas where the results were satisfied, but there is still a place for improvement.

In February 2017 the consensus report form with the evaluation was received, where the following recommendations were given:

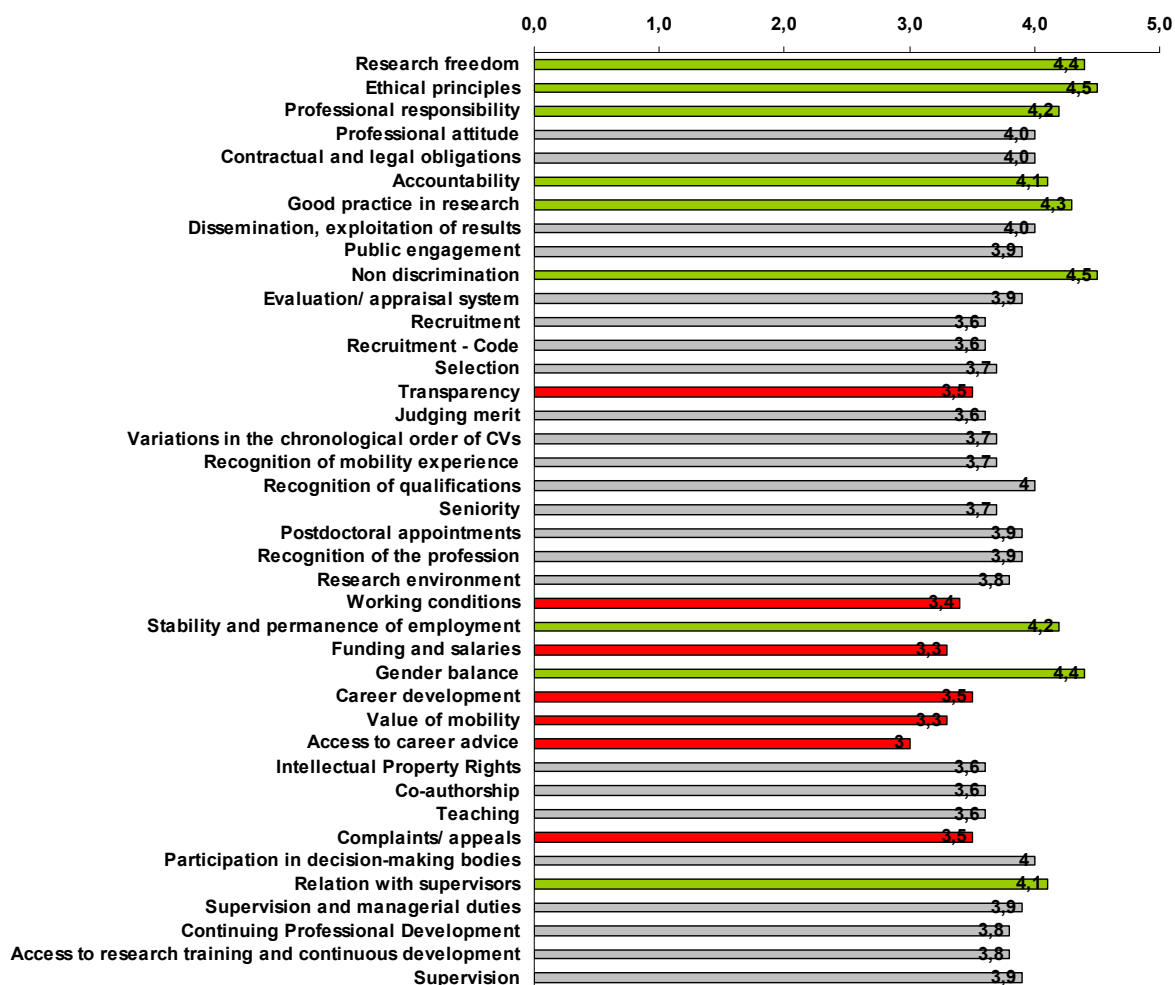
- would be useful identify the R1, R2, R3 and R4 category of the researchers that were members of the working group
- the target group of the survey is not clear and the rate of answers to the survey is lower then expected (31 answers – 43%)
- results have not been extensively analysed or commented, and the weaknesses detected have not specifically considered in the Action Plan
- some of the actions are vaguely or imprecisely described
- the long-term strategy is missing
- there is no specific webpage with the content and strategy of HRS4R at the IKARD

In order to implement the experts' recommendations a range of changes were introduced in the HRS4R – Gap Analysis and Action Plan. The changes included:

- on-line survey was re-send to the administration staff and researchers (levels R1 to R4) in order to secure the highest feedback possible
- young researchers were additionally consulted
- Gap Analysis results and Action Plan were re-written and re-edited
- more detailed information on the areas was provided in the document
- strengths and challenges were identified and analysed
- the short, medium and long – term strategy was marked in the Gantt chart
- description of the monitoring of the action plan was added at the end of this document
- strategy of HRS4R was placed on the webpage

Figure 1 below shows the average scoring for the single statements. It is important to note that the average point evaluation for almost all the statements is above 3.5 that is the “rather positive”.

**Figure 1: Average assessment for the single statements**



### 3.1. Research freedom

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should focus their research for the good of mankind and on expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge, while enjoying the freedom of thought and expression, and the freedom to identify methods by which problems are solved, according to recognised ethical principles and practices. Researchers should, however, recognise the limitations to this freedom that could arise as a result of particular research circumstances (including supervision/guidance/management) or operational constraints, e.g. for budgetary or infrastructural reasons or, especially in the industrial sector, for reasons of intellectual property protection. Such limitations should not, however, contravene recognised ethical principles and practices, to which researchers have to adhere.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The internal rules and practices existing in the Institute guarantee researchers freedom in defining their research interests, choosing methodology, formulating opinions and disseminating research results. The Research Plan for the Institute is created on the basis of applications submitted by researchers. In accordance with “The Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology on the implementation of the policy statement in the field of the mode and conditions of preparation and reporting of the work financed from the resources for the maintenance of the research potential”, all applications take part in the competition procedure. The constraints for scientists are financial, legal and infrastructural limits. Researchers follow the code of ethics and the rules of a good practice in science.

**Actions required:**

The Institute will provide constant support for the research process, supervision and guidance for young researchers and at the same time will inform the scientists about operational constraints. Researchers should be more encouraged to publications in international medical journals, which can be beneficial for their personal development.

Rules for intellectual property protection will be revised especially with respect to commercialization process.

### 3.2. Ethical principles

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their discipline(s) as well as to ethical standards as documented in the different national, sectoral or institutional Codes of Ethics.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute acts in the framework of the Code of Ethics for Researchers and Good practices in research. All employees are familiar with the Code of Ethics approved by the Institute management. Researchers act in accordance with ethical principles appropriate to their disciplines.

**Actions required:**

Institute will provide constant support for the research process in accordance with ethical principles, including dissemination of the institutional Code of Ethics. Supplementing information concerning ethical principles with regard to conducting research on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Introduction of periodic training programme with regard to Code of Ethics for researchers.

### 3.3. Professional responsibility

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should make every effort to ensure that their research is relevant to society and does not duplicate research previously carried out elsewhere. They must avoid plagiarism of any kind and abide by the principle of intellectual property and joint data ownership in the case of research carried out in collaboration with a supervisor(s) and/or other researchers. The need to validate new observations by showing that experiments are reproducible should not be interpreted as plagiarism, provided that the data to be confirmed are explicitly quoted. Researchers should ensure, if any aspect of their work is delegated, that the person to whom it is delegated has the competence to carry it out.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Researchers are expected to produce original and socially relevant work respecting the Code of Ethics for Researchers. They are also expected to follow the principles of authorship of

scientific publications. The Institute has approved Regulations for the use the results of intellectual work created in the Institute of Cardiology. Researchers are required to be familiar-to-date with the literature on the subject of their research and the Institute provides access to the database of literature. Plagiarism is subject to penalties, including expulsion from the Institute.

**Actions required:**

Bringing plagiarism detection tools into general use. Introduction of a diagram of systematic use of tools for detecting plagiarism by research supervisors. Supplementing information concerning the problem of plagiarism on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Introduction of periodic training system with regard to plagiarism for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

**3.4. Professional attitude**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should be familiar with the strategic goals governing their research environment and funding mechanisms, and should seek all necessary approvals before starting their research or accessing the resources provided. They should inform their employers, funders or supervisor when their research project is delayed, redefined or completed, or give notice if it is to be terminated earlier or suspended for whatever reason.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Researchers are clearly informed about the procedures necessary to start the research. Work schedule and budget is attached to each project. To improve employee's access to information about opportunities for research funding the Research Programs and Clinical Trials Unit was established in 2016. It's task is to inform research staff on opportunities, conditions and procedures of external research funding and to support the application process. The Research Programs and Clinical Trials Unit also provides support in management of successful grants. Internal procedures are in place for launching new projects or to apply for external funding and to obtain necessary permissions.

Researchers are obliged to inform employers and / or funders in case of delays, schedule changes, moving funds and about the completion of the project.



**Actions required:**

Implementing a more efficient information system on funding mechanisms on the Institute's website. Introduction of training system for researchers with regard to the mechanism of financing research and supplementing information concerning research financing system on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Implementing internal auditing rules. Facilitating fluency and conscious cooperation between researchers and administration.

**3.5. Contractual and legal obligations****Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers at all levels must be familiar with the national, sectoral or institutional regulations governing training and/or working conditions. This includes Intellectual Property Rights regulations, and the requirements and conditions of any sponsor or funders, independently of the nature of their contract. Researchers should adhere to such regulations by delivering the required results (e.g. thesis, publications, patents, reports, new products development, etc) as set out in the terms and conditions of the contract or equivalent document.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Working conditions are governed by national laws that are The Labor Code as well as institutional regulations, mainly Work Regulations of the Institute of Cardiology and The Collective Labor Agreement.

When signing their employment contract, all employees thereby acknowledge and accept national and institutional laws and regulations governing it. Employees are familiar with safety instructions at work, job description and other requirements applicable to their post during recruitment. Researchers are requested to follow Data Protection guidelines.

**Actions required:**

Supplementing information concerning the system of legal regulations applicable within the Institute of Cardiology with regard to training and work conditions on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Providing current information on the Intellectual Property Rights regulations at the institutions website.

### 3.6. Accountability

#### **Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers need to be aware that they are accountable towards their employers, funders or other related public or private bodies as well as, on more ethical grounds, towards society as a whole. In particular, researchers funded by public funds are also accountable for the efficient use of taxpayers' money. Consequently, they should adhere to the principles of sound, transparent and efficient financial management and cooperate with any authorised audits of their research, whether undertaken by their employers/funders or by ethics committees.

Methods of collection and analysis, the outputs and, where applicable, details of the data should be open to internal and external scrutiny, whenever necessary and as requested by the appropriate authorities.

#### **Existing rules and practices:**

The research budget of the Institute comes mainly from subsidies of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education but also from the National Science Centre, National Centre for Research and Development and from European and American grants.

Researchers are aware that they are accountable for use of taxpayers' money in the most economical and transparent way and details are available if needed for the purpose of internal and external control.

The management of research funding is based on national legislation: Act on the Principles of Financing Science, Act on the National Science Centre, Act on the National Centre for Research and Development and on the institutional regulations. The requirements concerning handling of the awarded funds as well as reporting and monitoring are described in detail in those acts.

The Research Programs and Clinical Trials Unit helps to manage the process by fixing internal deadlines, collecting data and information when necessary then transferring the reports to relevant authorities.

#### **Actions required:**

Supplementing information concerning the rules of internal audit on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

### 3.7. Good practice in research

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should at all times adopt safe working practices, in line with national legislation, including taking the necessary precautions for health and safety and for recovery from information technology disasters, e.g. by preparing proper back-up strategies. They should also be familiar with the current national legal requirements regarding data protection and confidentiality protection requirements, and undertake the necessary steps to fulfill them at all times.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Researchers are introduced to safety instructions at work during their recruitment. The Institute employs a specialist responsible for the implementation of a Health and Safety Regulations.

In accordance with The Act of 29 August 1997 on The Protection of Personal Data internal data protection procedures have been implemented.

**Actions required:**

Modification of applicable rules with regard to protection of sensitive information. Introduction of a training system for researchers who start their career with regard to data protection and confidentiality protection requirements. Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

### 3.8. Dissemination and exploitation of results

**Principle of the European Charter:**

All researchers should ensure, in compliance with their contractual arrangements, that the results of their research are disseminated and exploited, e.g. communicated, transferred into other research settings or, if appropriate, commercialised. Senior researchers, in particular, are expected to take a lead in ensuring that research is fruitful and that results are either exploited commercially or made accessible to the public (or both) whenever the opportunity arises.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Pursuant to the scope of obligations/contract, the researchers of the Institute are obliged to disseminate and publish the research results in the form of publications, teaching materials (developing books, chapters). The researchers of the Institute participate in transfer of knowledge and research results through active participation in domestic and international conferences, congresses, working groups, meetings organised by other scientific institutions, as well as through symposiums organised by the Institute itself. The dissemination of research results is taken into account in the evaluation of scientific units by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and in the internal evaluation of Institute's scientific staff. In addition, publications in prestigious international journals are taken into account in the process of shortlisting candidates for the Directors' Award. Bibliographical information is placed on the external system PBN (Polish Scholarly Bibliography), internal system EXPERTUS and IKARD's webpage.

**Actions required:**

Modification of legal and institutional mechanisms for the commercialization of research results. Introduction of training system for researchers who start their career in this regard. Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Senior researchers assembled in the Komisja Nauki (Research Commission) provide regular advice to the junior researchers concerning the quality of the projects and their dissemination.

**3.9. Public engagement****Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers should ensure that their research activities are made known to society at large in such a way that they can be understood by non-specialists, thereby improving the public's understanding of science. Direct engagement with the public will help researchers to better understand public interest in priorities for science and technology and also the public's concerns.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The researchers of the Institute are the authors of many educational and scientific publications available to a wide audience. They conduct activities popularising science and knowledge by means of interviews, participation in TV and radio shows, publishing articles on web portals (rd), and by means of expert roles within many domestic and international

scientific associations and expert groups. The Institute also organises information and educational campaigns, namely Patient Day, Heart Failure Awareness Day, where researchers give free advice, consultations and lectures.

**Actions required:**

Continuation of current activities with regard to public involvement of the researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

**3.10. Non discrimination**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers will not discriminate against researchers in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute has developed “Regulation for methods of counteracting discrimination, molesting, mobbing”. Institute does not discriminate against researchers on the basis of age, gender, religion, political views, disability, social or economic condition, to mention the most important.

**Actions required:**

Supplementing information of the antidiscrimination laws on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

**3.11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should introduce for all researchers, including senior researchers, evaluation/appraisal systems for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner by an independent (and, in the case of senior researchers, preferably international) committee.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute is governed by the Regulations concerning assessment of scientific and research and technical staff, which are based on statutory regulations. The Regulations contain detailed criteria and procedure with regard to assessment of scientific staff. The following parameters are provided for in the Regulations: publications, scientific development, scientific projects, patents gained. The Regulations are open and available for all employees. Each employee is notified of the results of the assessment individually and may appeal their assessments. The assessment is conducted every 2 years by the Academic Record Assessment Commission, which is appointed by the Scientific Board of the Institute. Institute has a system Science Wizard which supports the periodic evaluation of scientific employees and is consistent with National parametrization (evaluation system) frames.

**Actions required:**

Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology. Sharing research unit periodic assessment reports on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

**3.12. Recruitment****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that the entry and admission standards for researchers, particularly at the beginning at their careers, are clearly specified and should also facilitate access for disadvantaged groups or for researchers returning to a research career, including teachers (of any level) returning to a research career. Employers and/or funders of researchers should adhere to the principles set out in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers when appointing or recruiting researchers.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The process of recruiting scientific staff in the Institute of Cardiology is preceded by analysis of employment and establishment of a scientific position profile. The source of recruitment (publishing of offers, contests) is established. The regulations contained in the Act on Research Institutes, Constitution of the Institute of Cardiology, the Labour Code, as well as internal regulations are applicable with regard to recruitment process.

**Actions required:**

Development of standardized Research Position Description Form, including goals of employment, responsibility and rights of this position. Development of the system of rules facilitating return to work for people whose academic career was interrupted due to reasons beyond their control.

**3.13. Recruitment (Code)****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should establish recruitment procedures which are open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable, as well as tailored to the type of positions advertised. Advertisements should give a broad description of knowledge and competencies required, and should not be so specialised as to discourage suitable applicants. Employers should include a description of the working conditions and entitlements, including career development prospects. Moreover, the time allowed between the advertisement of the vacancy or the call for applications and the deadline for reply should be realistic.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The selection of employees in the Institute of Cardiology is preceded by the recruitment process. The rules are described in the P-304 procedure — “Management of Human Resources” of Quality Management System are applicable in this regard. Recruitment of scientific staff is preceded by publishing of contest advertisement and appointment of Contest Commission according to the internal regulations. Job vacancies are published on the Institute’s webpage, Euraxess portal and Public Information Bulletin. The procedures are compliant with the requirements of superior laws and regulations.

**Actions required:**

Placing development prospects in contest advertisement; placing information concerning deadline for sending application documents on Institute’s website. Recruitment procedure will be revised in order to assure that recruitment timelines and deadlines are realistic.

Notifying candidates of the end of their recruitment process on earlier stages and keeping their application documents for the purpose of future recruitment processes for a given position.

### 3.14. Selection (Code)

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Selection committees should bring together diverse expertise and competences and should have an adequate gender balance and, where appropriate and feasible, include members from different sectors (public and private) and disciplines, including from other countries and with relevant experience to assess the candidate. Whenever possible, a wide range of selection practices should be used, such as external expert assessment and face-to-face interviews. Members of selection panels should be adequately trained should be realistic.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The composition of the Contest Commission in the Institute of Cardiology is established by means of the Order of the Director. Members of the Commission possess the necessary experience and qualifications. Verification of application documents of the Candidate is carried out prior to the interview. Common interviews with the Candidate are applicable.

**Actions required:**

Updating the Regulations concerning the Contest Commission with promotion regulations in the form of the attachment to contest advertisement as well as inclusion of specialists from other units and external experts in the contest commissions if required by the specificity of the position. Supplementing the regulations with regard to the requirement concerning the gender equality rule with regard to the composition of the contest commissions.

### 3.15. Transparency (Code)

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Candidates should be informed, prior to the selection, about the recruitment process and the selection criteria, the number of available positions and the career development prospects. They should also be informed after the selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology notifies the Candidates within the recruitment process, criteria and number of available positions. In the case of employment for a specified period, this period is also specified. There is a good practice of notifying the Candidates of the results directly after the interview.



**Actions required:**

Addition of the obligation to notify the Candidates of strengths and weaknesses of their application forms to the Regulations concerning the Contest Commission.

**3.16. Judging merit (Code)****Principle of the European Charter:**

The selection process should take into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered. This means that merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications. Consequently, the importance of bibliometric indices should be properly balanced within a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities. For candidates from an industrial background, particular attention should be paid to any contributions to patents, development or inventions.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The scientific record of the Candidate appropriate for a given position, knowledge, experience and practical skills are taken into consideration during the recruitment process. In special cases different qualifications, such as: internal motivation, skills and predispositions, appropriate behaviour and attitude expected in the workplace, are taken into consideration.

**Actions required:**

Development of uniform assessment rules within the contest procedure encompassing particular areas of researchers' activity, including (apart from bibliometric indices) achievements with regard to teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities.

**3.17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)****Principle of the European Charter:**

Career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs should not be penalised, but regarded as an evolution of a career, and consequently, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multidimensional career track.

Candidates should therefore be allowed to submit evidence-based CVs, reflecting a representative array of achievements and qualifications appropriate to the post for which application is being made.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The documents confirming qualifications and experience of a Candidate (certificates of employment, other certificates) are taken into consideration during the recruitment process within the Institute of Cardiology. Interruptions of employment are not taken into consideration except with regard to employee rights as regulated within internal regulations concerning rules of remuneration. In other cases that does not matter.

**Actions required:**

Changes of the Regulations concerning Contest Commission taking into consideration the rule of no penalty for career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs.

**3.18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Any mobility experience, e.g. a stay in another country/region or in another research setting (public or private) or a change from one discipline or sector to another, whether as part of the initial research training or at a later stage of the research career, or virtual mobility experience, should be considered as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Candidate receives additional points for experience in other domestic or international research facilities. Experience with regard to mobility of researchers is taken into consideration for scientific promotion. The criteria for the Candidate are regulated in the law and internal regulations.

**Actions required:**

Clarification of requirements connected with mobility of the Candidate for a scientific position within the internal regulations of the Institute (minimum criteria for a scientific position) - changes within the Regulations concerning Contest Commission taking into consideration the rule of awarding bonuses for researchers mobility.

### 3.19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should provide for appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including non-formal qualifications, of all researchers, in particular within the context of international and professional mobility. They should inform themselves and gain a full understanding of rules, procedures and standards governing the recognition of such qualifications and, consequently, explore existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications through all available channels.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The national legal regulations with regard to recognition of education necessary for a given position are applicable in the Institute of Cardiology. Professional qualifications confirmed by certificates gained abroad are also recognised. The recruitment commissions read the Candidate documents prior to the interview. In the case of any doubt, they have the right to verify such documents.

**Actions required:**

Introduction of update system for information concerning existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications. Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for administration of the Institute of Cardiology.

### 3.20. Seniority (Code)

**Principle of the European Charter:**

The levels of qualifications required should be in line with the needs of the position and not be set as a barrier to entry. Recognition and evaluation of qualifications should focus on judging the achievements of the person rather than his/her circumstances or the reputation of the institution where the qualifications were gained. As professional qualifications may be gained at an early stage of a long career, the pattern of lifelong professional development should also be recognised.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Basic qualifications for a given position are indicated in the Corporate Collective Labour Agreement of the Institute of Cardiology. Additional requirements are determined in the

recruitment advertisement/contest. Achievements of a Candidate, predispositions, skills, motivation for a given job are particularly taken into consideration in the selection process.

**Actions required:**

Additional requirements for a position of a scientific employee are placed in the recruitment advertisement/contest and in Position Description Form. Adoption of rules connected with avoidance of obstacles within recruitment process regulations, e.g. in the form of too detailed or too difficult requirements with regard to particular positions.

**3.21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Clear rules and explicit guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers, including the maximum duration and the objectives of such appointments, should be established by the institutions appointing postdoctoral researchers. Such guidelines should take into account time spent in prior postdoctoral appointments at other institutions and take into consideration that the postdoctoral status should be transitional, with the primary purpose of providing additional professional development opportunities for a research career in the context of long-term career prospects.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Hiring and promoting staff with the title of doctor in the Institute of Cardiology is carried out in accordance with the Act on Research Institutes and internal regulations (orders).

**Actions required:**

Development of guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers taking into account transitional status of postdoctoral appointments.

**3.22. Recognition of the profession**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

All researchers engaged in a research career should be recognized as professionals and be treated accordingly. This should commence at the beginning of their careers, namely at postgraduate level, and should include all levels, regardless of their classification at national

level (e.g. employee, postgraduate student, doctoral candidate, postdoctoral fellow, civil servants).

**Existing rules and practices:**

All researchers in the Institute of Cardiology are considered professionals who perform their work duties diligently and care about the level and validity of their competence.

**Actions required: None**

### 3.23. Research environment

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers should ensure that the most stimulating research or research training environment is created which offers appropriate equipment, facilities and opportunities, including for remote collaboration over research networks, and that the national or sectoral regulations concerning health and safety in research are observed. Funders should ensure that adequate resources are provided in support of the agreed work programme.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology ensures working conditions that stimulate scientific development. During the last couple of years, it has been equipped with high quality medical equipment and devices. The researchers gained infrastructure which is necessary for conducting research. The Institute of Cardiology employs engineers, IT specialists, software developers, analysts who support researchers with their expertise and experience. The Institute cares for scientists by creating the best possible conditions and opportunities for conducting their research work. This includes also support in funds raising from external sources and administrative support.

**Actions required:**

Continuation of efforts concerning development of remote collaboration over research networks and the rules of its financing are necessary.

### 3.24. Working conditions

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that the working conditions for researchers, including for disabled researchers, provide where appropriate the flexibility deemed essential for successful research performance in accordance with existing national legislation and with national or sectoral collective-bargaining agreements. They should aim to provide working conditions which allow both women and men researchers to combine family and work, children and career. Particular attention should be paid, inter alia, to flexible working hours, part-time working, tele-working and sabbatical leave, as well as to the necessary financial and administrative provisions governing such arrangements.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology ensures proper working conditions according to the law, observes the provisions of the labour code and rules of occupational health and safety. The Institute ensures individual work time schedule adjusted to the needs of employees. Working conditions allow to efficiently combine family and work, children and career. The rules of justifying the absence resulting from scientific activity outside of the Institute have been developed in the Institute.

**Actions required:**

Development of rules allowing for conducting research in the form of flexible working hours, part-time working, tele-working. Increase in availability of sabbatical leave. Development of financial and administrative provisions governing such arrangements in the scope of organisational possibilities and resources of the institution.

### 3.25. Stability and permanence of employment

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that the performance of researchers is not undermined by instability of employment contracts, and should therefore commit themselves as far as possible to improving the stability of employment conditions for researchers, thus implementing and abiding by the principles and terms laid down in the EU Directive on Fixed-Term Work.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology maintains employment policy according to national laws and internal regulations. The Institute particularly observes the limits connected with contracts for a specified period of time. The employees are notified of the possibilities of continuing employment. The following procedures were developed and implemented in the Institute of Cardiology: professional orientation and periodic assessment of the employees. The results of the procedures affect the decision concerning continuation of employment. The employee is notified of such rules at the time of employment according to the aforementioned procedures.

**Actions required: None**

**3.26. Funding and salaries****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers should ensure that researchers enjoy fair and attractive conditions of funding and/or salaries with adequate and equitable social security provisions (including sickness and parental benefits, pension rights and unemployment benefits) in accordance with existing national legislation and with national or sectoral collective bargaining agreements. This must include researchers at all career stages including early-stage researchers, commensurate with their legal status, performance and level of qualifications and/or responsibilities

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology ensures remuneration in accordance with a national law and internal regulations (Labour Code, Corporate Collective Labour Agreement). The Institute of Cardiology ensures social insurance in accordance with the national law and collective labour agreements, as well as social package (co-financing of holiday leave and special assistance grants) for all employees at every stage of their professional careers. Researchers and most of employees of Institute of Cardiology are employed on the basis of employment contract. The Polish employment law provides strong employee protection in terms of stability of employment – it is obligatory to make a third contract permanent (for indefinite period of time) if a person is continuously employed.

Contractors implementing research projects are employed in accordance with terms and conditions of employment and salary of particular grant program.

However, many researchers expressed in the questionnaire the opinion that they are not enjoying attractive conditions of funding and salaries. The reason is the unsatisfactory financial situation. For many years, the research institutes in Poland have been struggling with underfunding. Moreover, from year to year the amount of money awarded within basic scientific grants has been decreasing.

**Actions required:**

The way out of that situation would be to search for new, promising research subjects and to increase employees' knowledge about new possibilities of acquiring national and international research grants. Actions currently undertaken, aimed at increasing remuneration of scientific staff, include searching for other sources of financing from national and international foundations and providing up-to-date information to the researches through internal information system (dedicated email service).

### **3.27. Gender balance**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should aim for a representative gender balance at all levels of staff, including at supervisory and managerial level. This should be achieved on the basis of an equal opportunity policy at recruitment and at the subsequent career stages without, however, taking precedence over quality and competence criteria. To ensure equal treatment, selection and evaluation committees should have an adequate gender balance.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology ensures gender balance within Commissions and Recruitment Committees.

The scientific staff (55 people) consists of 35 men and 20 women. The research and technical staff (9 people) consists of 1 man and 8 women.

In the recruitment process men and women have equal chances of access to career development, rewards, grants and trainings. Employment rules are strictly based on the experience of candidates, there are no regulation addressing the gender balance issue.

**Actions required: None**



### 3.28. Career development

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers should draw up, preferably within the framework of their human resources management, a specific career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, including for researchers on fixed-term contracts. It should include the availability of mentors involved in providing support and guidance for the personal and professional development of researchers, thus motivating them and contributing to reducing any insecurity in their professional future. All researchers should be made familiar with such provisions and arrangements

**Existing rules and practices:**

Individual career stages of a scientific employee in the Institute of Cardiology are consistent with the provisions of national law — the Act on Research Institutes and internal regulations. Working within research teams allows for the possibility to maintain master-student relationship during every career stage and regardless of the type of employment contract.

Unit of Planning and Administration of Science supports researchers in their career development: both in terms of obtaining academic degrees and promotions for scientific positions.

**Actions required:**

A career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career needs to be developed, which will be based on profiles aligned to scientific positions, from young researchers to professor based on recently updated criteria for career development.

Development of Training Regulations for employees.

The plan of training and specialist courses is published on the website of the Institute.

Presentation of information package concerning promotion criteria in the case of new employees. Supplementing information in this regard on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

### 3.29. Value of mobility

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders must recognize the value of geographical, intersectorial, inter- and trans-disciplinary and virtual mobility as well as mobility between the public and private sector as an important means of enhancing scientific knowledge and professional

development at any stage of a researcher's career. Consequently, they should build such options into the specific career development strategy and fully value and acknowledge any mobility experience within their career progression/appraisal system. This also requires that the necessary administrative instruments be put in place to allow the portability of both grants and social security provisions, in accordance with national legislation.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology supports mobility of scientific employees by ensuring and executing domestic and foreign trips according to the national law. The Institute owns organisational sections responsible for organisation of trips, internships, research executed as part of grants. According to the Order of the Director of the Institute of Cardiology No 51 on the financial resources to cover the costs of domestic and foreign trips and the costs of publication, young researchers can apply for six – weeks internships abroad funded from Institute's budget. Experience gained abroad by researchers during internships and trainings in foreign centers are highly prized at IKARD. Acquired experience is the basis of the implementation of new research methods and organizational solutions within the Institute. The value of mobility is taken into account in the evaluation of scientific units by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

**Actions required:**

Promotion of short foreign scientific internship for young researchers; newsletter containing information on potential cooperation/foreign exchange within the research project, scientific internship, foreign scholarship etc.

To ensure administrative support for all persons applying for scientific internships and trainings.

**3.30. Access to career advice**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that career advice and job placement assistance, either in the institutions concerned, or through collaboration with other structures, is offered to researchers at all stages of their careers, regardless of their contractual situation.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute of Cardiology allows for professional development and improvement of professional qualifications of all its employees. It executes internal and external training pursuant to training needs reported by the superiors. It ensures funds for training according to internal regulations. However, internal gap analysis and survey proved that the Institute offers limited advice on career management and development. It could enable an individual researcher to set a clear career path.

**Actions required:**

Appointment of a Mentor Group in the Institute of Cardiology

Consultations of employee with superior/research supervisor/Director for Science or other responsible employee with regard to his or her career path. Dissemination of information concerning promotion criteria. Development of support system for employees with regard to their professional career outside of the Institute of Cardiology. Counselling services: links redirecting to web portals concerning meetings, twinning and opportunities, e.g. EURAXESS.

**3.31. Intellectual Property Rights****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that researchers at all career stages reap the benefits of the exploitation (if any) of their R&D results through legal protection and, in particular, through appropriate protection of Intellectual Property Rights, including copyrights. Policies and practices should specify what rights belong to researchers and/or, where applicable, to their employers or other parties, including external commercial or industrial organisations, as possibly provided for under specific collaboration agreements or other types of agreement.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The area of copyright protection is regulated by the Act of 4 February 1994 *on Copyright and related Rights*.

The rules and practices concerning intellectual property rights are established in the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology. The Director's plenipotentiary for intellectual property is appointed by the Institute of Cardiology.

**Actions required:**

Training for researchers with regard to intellectual property rights, their types and options of assignment, commercialization.

Update of the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology. Supplementing information in this regard on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

**3.32. Co-authorship****Principle of the European Charter:**

Co-authorship should be viewed positively by institutions when evaluating staff, as evidence of a constructive approach to the conduct of research.

Employers and/or funders should therefore develop strategies, practices and procedures to provide researchers, including those at the beginning of their research careers, with the necessary framework conditions so that they can enjoy the right to be recognised and listed and/or quoted, in the context of their actual contributions, as co-authors of papers, patents, etc, or to publish their own research results independently from their supervisor(s).

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute has a positive attitude towards joint authorship with regard to assessment of scientific staff and supports all forms of scientific cooperation between the researchers, including joint authorship. The rules of joint authorship of publications are applicable in the Institute. These are determined on the basis of the actual contribution to the publication and observed by all researchers. The rules also apply to researchers who start their career and are taken into consideration with regard to their assessment. The rules concerning interest in the patent rights are set in the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology.

**Actions required:**

Promoting young researchers with best publications (prizes, additional financing). Update of the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology. Improvement in readability of information concerning the current research on the website of the Institute. Intra-institutional networking.

### 3.33. Teaching

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Teaching is an essential means for the structuring and dissemination of knowledge and should therefore be considered a valuable option within the researchers' career paths. However, teaching responsibilities should not be excessive and should not prevent researchers, particularly at the beginning of their careers, from carrying out their research activities. Employers and/or funders should ensure that teaching duties are adequately remunerated and taken into account in the evaluation/appraisal systems, and that time devoted by senior members of staff to the training of early stage researchers should be counted as part of their teaching commitment. Suitable training should be provided for teaching and coaching activities as part of the professional development of researchers.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The employees of the Institute participate in courses and workshops organised by universities, institutes and other entities as lecturers. This is a very important part of their scientific development. The scope of responsibilities of the employees of the Institute connected with lectures is limited due to the nature of the institution. Teaching and coaching is provided individually by Senior Researchers.

**Actions required:**

Development of systematic training programme for young researchers.

### 3.34. Complains/ appeals

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers should establish, in compliance with national rules and regulations, appropriate procedures, possibly in the form of an impartial (ombudsman-type) person to deal with complaints/appeals of researchers, including those concerning conflicts between supervisor(s) and early-stage researchers. Such procedures should provide all research staff with confidential and informal assistance in resolving work-related conflicts, disputes and grievances, with the aim of promoting fair and equitable treatment within the institution and improving the overall quality of the working environment.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Currently, the head of the clinic is the first appeal instance in the case of conflicts between researchers. In the case of conflicts with broader scope or which cannot be solved on the first level, the appeal process encompasses the director for science.

**Actions required:**

Development of rules of support for researchers in the case of internal conflicts, appointment of researcher's rights advocate.

**3.35. Participation in decision-making bodies****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders of researchers should recognize it as wholly legitimate, and indeed desirable, that researchers be represented in the relevant information, consultation and decision-making bodies of the institutions for which they work, so as to protect and promote their individual and collective interests as professionals and to actively contribute to the workings of the institution.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute fully recognizes the right of researchers to have representatives in the competent information, consultation and decision bodies in the Institute. The members of the Scientific Board and Commissions appointed by such Board are representatives of the whole scientific and clinical society of the Institute, elected by direct secret voting, who take part in making strategic decisions concerning development of the Institute. The trade unions, the agents of which represent interest of all employees, also operate in the Institute.

**Actions required: None****3.36. Relation with supervisors****Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers in their training phase should establish a structured and regular relationship with their supervisor(s) and faculty/departmental representative(s) so as to take full advantage of their relationship with them. This includes keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such

feedback and working in accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs

**Existing rules and practices:**

The researchers who start their career are supported directly by the head of a given clinic or person appointed, who may provide them with expertise and assessment of their research development. However, there is no formal structured support system. Launch of doctoral studies in the Institute is planned in 2017. The future PhD students shall be supported by research supervisors and, after pursuing a doctoral dissertation, by the thesis supervisors. The task of the research supervisor and thesis supervisor is to support the PhD students with their scientific career development and allow them to achieve the expected educational results as indicated in the doctoral studies syllabus.

**Actions required:**

Introduction of rules structuring relations of young researchers with their research supervisors, including keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such feedback and working in accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs.

**3.37. Supervision and managerial duties**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Senior researchers should devote particular attention to their multi-faceted role as supervisors, mentors, career advisors, leaders, project coordinators, managers or science communicators. They should perform these tasks to the highest professional standards. With regard to their role as supervisors or mentors of researchers, senior researchers should build up a constructive and positive relationship with the early-stage researchers, in order to set the conditions for efficient transfer of knowledge and for the further successful development of the researchers' careers

**Existing rules and practices:**

The scientific employees of the Institute conduct broad scientific activity and hold the position of research supervisors, mentors, project coordinators and popularises of science. As people holding positions in numerous organisations of the Institute and outside of the Institute, they provide necessary support and supervise the education process and scientific development of employees who start their scientific career. They also hold positions connected with clinic

management where, apart from scientific activity, they are also leaders with regard to education of young staff and providing them with practical clinical knowledge.

**Actions required: None**

### **3.38. Continuing Professional Development**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Researchers at all career stages should seek to continually improve themselves by regularly updating and expanding their skills and competencies. This may be achieved by a variety of means including, but not restricted to, formal training, workshops, conferences and e-learning.

**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute encourages all employees to develop their careers and supports their pursuit of qualifications improvement by allowing them to participate in conferences, training, workshops depending on the availability of funds. The Institute covers (depending on availability of funds) the costs connected with participation in training and conferences. Each researcher has an access to the travel/training grants of approximately 3000 Euro within each 3-year period and a guaranteed 10 to 14 working days payed leave for facultative training plus non-restrictive access to obligatory training (required by national law/regulations).

**Actions required:**

Sharing e-learning systems for young researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.

### **3.39. Access to research training and continuous development**

**Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that all researchers at any stage of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, are given the opportunity for professional development and for improving their employability through access to measures for the continuing development of skills and competencies. Such measures should be regularly assessed for their accessibility, take up and effectiveness in improving competencies, skills and employability.



**Existing rules and practices:**

The Institute ensures the possibility of constant professional development and access to training. The employees have the possibility to participate in scientific conferences, specialist courses, workshops organised in the Institute or outside of it on every stage of their scientific career.

**Actions required:**

Development of a feedback system concerning barriers to accessibility, take up and effectiveness of measures to improve competencies, skills and employability of researchers.

**3.40. Supervision****Principle of the European Charter:**

Employers and/or funders should ensure that a person is clearly identified to whom early-stage researchers can refer for the performance of their professional duties, and should inform the researchers accordingly. Such arrangements should clearly define that the proposed supervisors are sufficiently expert in supervising research, have the time, knowledge, experience, expertise and commitment to be able to offer the research trainee appropriate support and provide for the necessary progress and review procedures, as well as the necessary feedback mechanisms.

**Existing rules and practices:**

Scientists who start their career in the Institute report to the head of the clinic who acts as mentor and provides them with information connected with their obligations directly or via senior researchers. Science Planning and Administration Department also provides information and support with regard to development of scientific career of the beginners.

**Actions required:**

Due to the launch of doctoral studies, the rules for appointment of research supervisor and obligations of such person shall be established.

#### 4. Conclusion

On the basis of the results of review of national regulations and procedures and practices at Institute of cardiology against the background of the principles of the Charter and the Code as well as the results of survey, strengths and challenges have been identified.

Items on which the level of implementation of the European Charter and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers was assessed as greater than 4,0 were considered as the strengths of the Institute. The highest rates of implementation were granted to the following items:

Ethical principles	4,5
Non discrimination	4,5
Gender balance	4,4
Research freedom	4,4
Good practice in research	4,3
Professional responsibility	4,2
Stability and permanence of employment	4,2
Accountability	4,1

The survey also revealed some challenges of the human resources strategies of the Institute. The working group selected items that had an average score of less than or equal to 3,5 for further and more detailed analysis. Subsequently, actions to improve the functioning of the Institute in those regards were to be planned and implemented. The lowest rates of implementation of The European Charter and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers were granted to the following items:

Access to career advice	3,0
Funding and salaries	3,3
Value of mobility	3,3
Working conditions	3,4
Career development	3,5
Complaints/ appeals	3,5
Transparency	3,5

## 5. SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN

On April 17th, 2015 the Director of the Institute signed the Declaration of endorsement of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Institute of Cardiology to The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, which created an obligation for the Management to undertake efforts towards obtaining the HR Logo Excellence in Research. The Working Group has collected and analyzed the national level and internal legislation, procedures and operational practices in force at IKARD against the Charter&Code principles. As a part of consultations in the process of preparation of the Internal Gap Analysis for the HR Excellence in Research an anonymous survey was carried out among IKARD employees in October 2016. Respondents were asked to provide replies based on a five-point scale, where one stood for a very negative assessment and five meant a very positive assessment. Therefore, each time when average assessments of a given issue are compared, value 3.5 or more stands for a rather positive assessment and values below 3.5 stands for negative assessments. There were 4 statements below the a-priori defined threshold of 3.5 points, 3 statements equal to 3,5 points and 33 statements above the threshold. In general the results of the survey confirm that the Institute of Cardiology fulfils most of the Charter and Code Principles. The detailed remarks provided by the respondents suggest that the key issue in most cases was the appropriate access to information. The strategy for remedial actions was developed, taking under consideration the specific character of the institution and its financing. Importantly both statements below the predefined threshold and above this threshold were addressed in the action plan. The summary of required actions is presented in the Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Summary of required actions**

<b>Task No.</b>	<b>Planned Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1	The Institute will provide constant support for the research process, supervision and guidance for young researchers and at the same time will inform the scientists about the operational constraints. Researchers will be more encouraged to publications in international medical journals, which can be beneficial for they personal development. Rules for intellectual property protection will be	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	On-going process  September 2017

	revised especially with respect to commercialization process.		
2	<p>The Institute will provide constant support for the research process in accordance with ethical principles, including dissemination of the institutional Code of Ethics.</p> <p>Supplementing information concerning ethical principles with regard to conducting research on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Introduction of periodic training programme with regard to Code of Ethics for researchers.</p>	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	<p>On-going process</p> <p>September 2017</p>
3	<p>Bringing plagiarism detection tools into general use.</p> <p>Introduction of a diagram of systematic use of tools for detecting plagiarism by research supervisors.</p> <p>Supplementing information concerning the problem of plagiarism on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Introduction of periodic training system with regard to plagiarism for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the Library/medical information unit	June 2017
4	<p>Implementing a more efficient information system on funding mechanisms on the Institute's website.</p> <p>Introduction of training system for researchers with regard to the mechanism of financing research and supplementing information concerning research financing system on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Facilitating fluency and conscious cooperation between researchers and administration.</p> <p>Implementing internal auditing rules.</p>	Head of the Research Programs and Clinical Trials Unit	November 2017

5	<p>Supplementing information concerning the system of legal regulations applicable within the Institute of Cardiology with regard to training and work conditions on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Providing current information on the Intellectual Property Rights regulations at the institutions website.</p>	Head of Human Resources Unit	May 2018
6	Supplementing information concerning the rules of internal audit on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	May 2017
7	<p>Modification of applicable rules with regard to protection of sensitive information.</p> <p>Introduction of a training system for researchers who start their career with regard to data protection and confidentiality protection requirements.</p> <p>Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit and Data Protection Officer	June 2018
8	<p>Modification of legal and institutional mechanisms for the commercialization of research results.</p> <p>Introduction of training system for researchers who start their career in this regard.</p> <p>Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Utworzenie repozytorium publikacji w Instytucie Kardiologii</p>	Head of the legal department  Head of the Library/Medical Information Unit	June 2018
9	Continuation of current activities with regard to public involvement of the researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.	Public relations officer	On-going process
10	Supplementing information of the antidiscrimination laws on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology	Head of Human Resources Unit	October 2017

11	<p>Supplementing information on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Sharing research unit periodic assessment reports on the websites intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	On-going process
12	<p>Development of standardized Research Position Description Form, including goals of employment, responsibility and rights of this position.</p> <p>Development of the system of rules facilitating return to work for people whose academic career was interrupted due to reasons beyond their control.</p>	Head of Human Resources Unit	May 2018
13	<p>Placing development prospects in contest advertisement; placing information concerning deadline for sending application documents on Institute's website.</p> <p>Recruitment procedure will be revised in order to assure that recruitment timelines and deadlines are realistic.</p> <p>Notifying candidates of the end of their recruitment process on earlier stages and keeping their application documents for the purpose of future recruitment processes for a given position.</p>	Head of Human Resources Unit	March 2019
14	<p>Updating the Regulations concerning the Contest Commission with promotion regulations in the form of the attachment to contest advertisement, as well as inclusion of specialists from other units and external experts in the contest commissions if required by the specificity of the position.</p> <p>Supplementing the regulations with regard to the requirement concerning the gender equality rule with regard to the composition of the contest commissions.</p>	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	June 2018
15	<p>Addition of the obligation to notify the Candidates of strengths and weaknesses of their application forms to the Regulations concerning the Contest Commission.</p>	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science	May 2018

		Unit	
16	Development of uniform assessment rules within the contest procedure encompassing particular areas of researchers' activity, including (apart from bibliometric indices) achievements with regard to teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	September 2017
17	Changes of the Regulations concerning Contest Commission taking into consideration the rule of no penalty for career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit/Human Resources Unit	December 2017
18	Clarification of requirements connected with mobility of the Candidate for a scientific position within the internal regulations of the Institute (minimum criteria for a scientific position) - changes within the Regulations concerning Contest Commission taking into consideration the rule of awarding bonuses for researchers mobility.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	September 2017
19	Introduction of update system for information concerning existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications. Supplementing information in this regard on the websites intended for administration of the Institute of Cardiology.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	March 2018  On-going process
20	Additional requirements for a position of a scientific employee are placed in the recruitment advertisement/contest and in Position Description Form. Adoption of rules connected with avoidance of obstacles within recruitment process regulations, e.g. in the form of too detailed or too difficult requirements with regard to particular positions. .	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	January 2018

21	Development of guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers taking into account transitional status of postdoctoral appointments.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	January 2018
23	Continuation of efforts concerning development of remote collaboration over research networks and the rules of its financing is necessary.	Research Director	On-going process
24	Development of rules allowing for conducting research in the form of flexible working hours, part-time working, tele-working. Increase in availability of sabbatical leave. Development of financial and administrative provisions governing such arrangements in the scope of organisational possibilities and resources of the institution.	Head of Human Resources Unit	September 2018
26	Actions aimed at increasing remuneration of scientific staff, including searching for other sources of financing from international foundations.	Research Director	On-going process
28	A career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career will be developed. Development of Training Regulations for employees. The plan of training and specialist courses will be published on the website of the Institute. Presentation of information package concerning promotion criteria in the case of new employees. Supplementing information in this regard on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	March 2019
29	Promotion of short foreign scientific internship for young researchers. Ensuring administrative support for all persons applying for scientific internships and trainings. Newsletter containing information on potential cooperation/foreign exchange within the research project, scientific internship, foreign scholarship etc.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	June 2017



	Taking into consideration the value of mobility in the results assessment survey of the scientific employee of the Institute of Cardiology.		
30	<p>Appointment of a Mentor Group in the Institute of Cardiology</p> <p>Counselling services: links redirecting to web portals concerning meetings, twinings and opportunities, e.g. EURAXESS</p> <p>Development of Training Regulations for employees.</p> <p>The plan of training and specialist courses is published on the website of the Institute.</p> <p>Consultations of employee with superior/research supervisor/Director for Science or other responsible employee with regard to his or her career path.</p> <p>Dissemination of information concerning promotion criteria.</p> <p>Development of support system for employees with regard to their professional career outside of the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the Education and Training Committee	September 2017
31	<p>Training for researchers with regard to intellectual property rights, their types and options of assignment, commercialization.</p> <p>Update of the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology.</p> <p>Supplementing information in this regard on the website intended for researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the legal department	June 2018
32	<p>Promoting young researchers with best publications (prizes, additional financing).</p> <p>Update of the Regulations concerning use of intellectual output created at the Institute of Cardiology.</p>	Head of the Library/Medical Information Unit	May 2017
33	Launch of doctoral studies in the Institute of Cardiology.	Head of the Planning and Administration	October 2017

		of Science Unit	
34	Development of rules of support for researchers in the case of internal conflicts, appointment of researcher's rights advocate.	Head of Human Resources Unit	September 2018
36	Introduction of rules structuring relations of young researchers with their research supervisors, including keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such feedback and working in accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs.	Head of Human Resources Unit	March 2018
38	Sharing e-learning systems for young researchers of the Institute of Cardiology.	Head of the Education and Training Committee	September 2018
39	Development of a feedback system concerning barriers to accessibility, take up and effectiveness of measures to improve competencies, skills and employability of the researchers.	Head of the Education and Training Committee	September 2018
40	Due to the launch of doctoral studies, the rules for appointment of research supervisor and obligations of such person will be established.	Head of the Planning and Administration of Science Unit	October 2017



## **Monitoring**

The progress of the Action Plan will be monitored by the HR Working Group, which will become the Steering Group. The monitoring will be done in the following steps:

1. The Steering Group plans to meet once every six months together with representatives of units responsible for implementation of the action.
2. A summary of the work performed, prepared by units responsible for specific tasks will be presented at least once a year.
3. Up-date of The Action Plan will be introduced after every meeting of the Steering Group.