Karolinska Institutet and Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine Partnership

A Decade of Collaboration 2015–2025

Summary and Highlights from the Partnership

Karolinska Institutet

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Partnership Report – Karolinska Institutet and Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine
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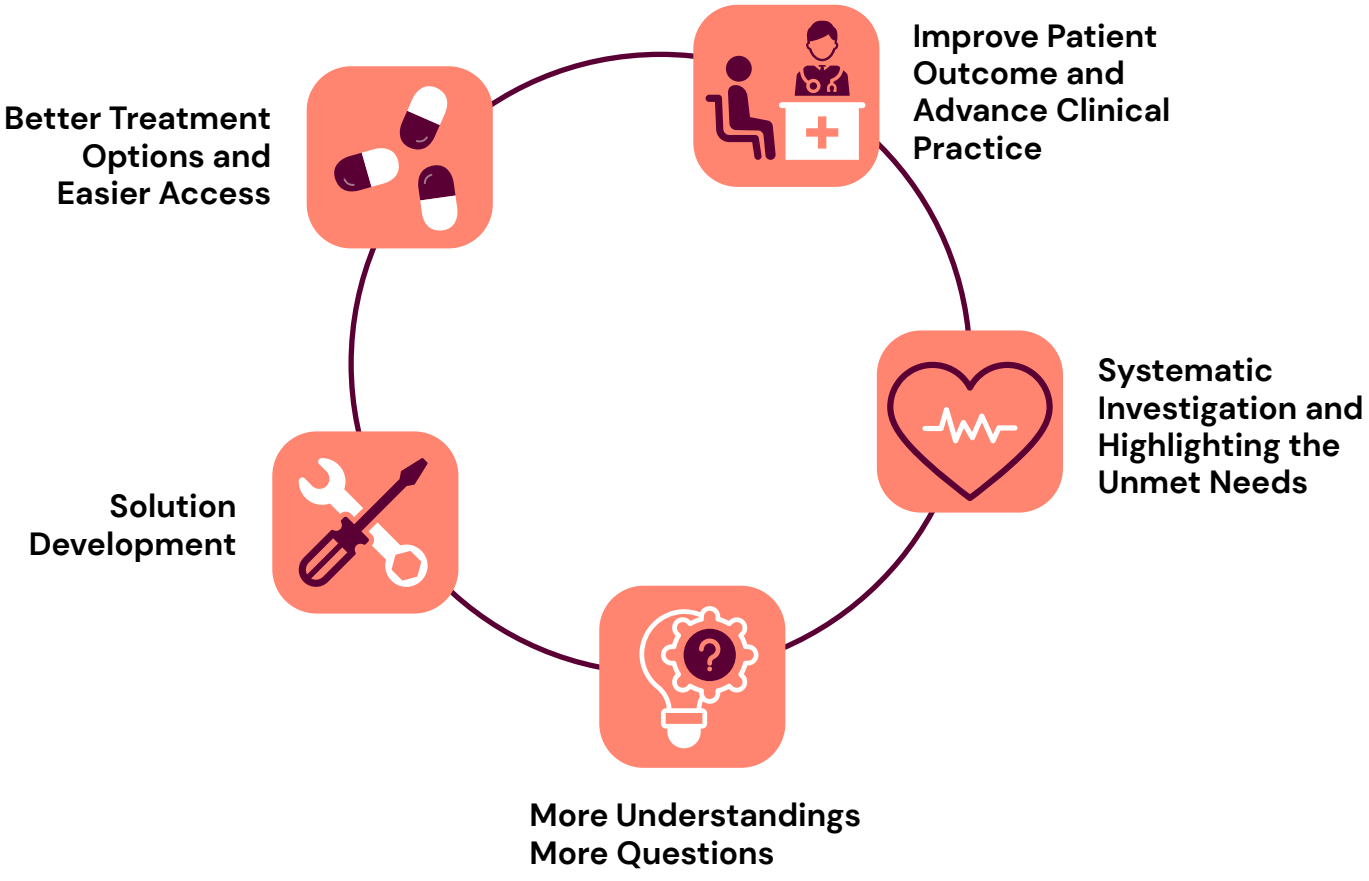
Cover photos: Liza Simonsson

Partnership Focus

The Goal is to Create Impact

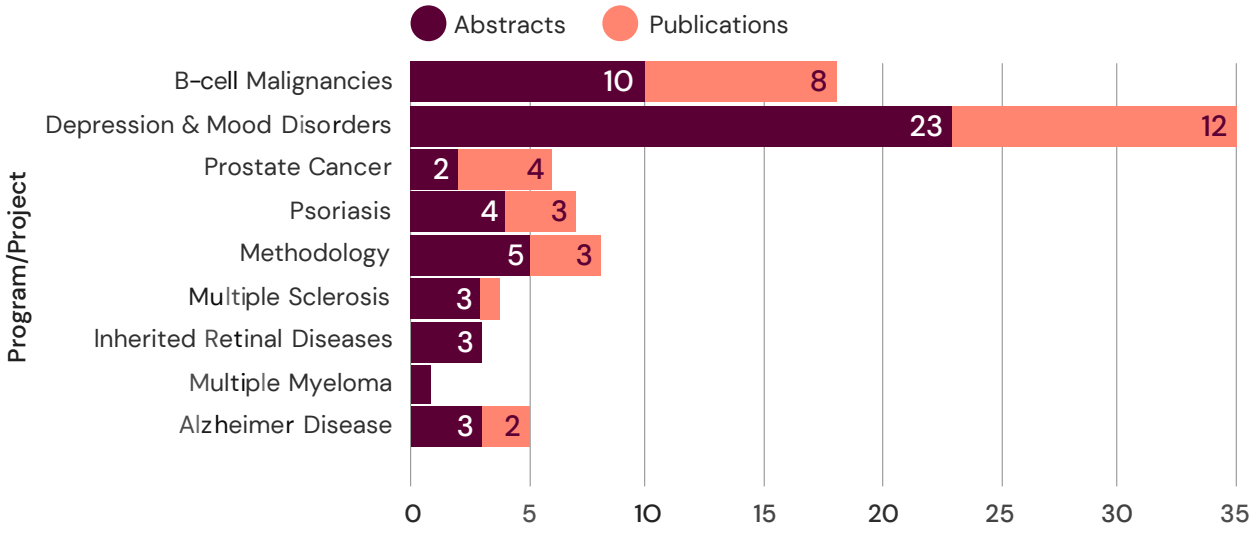
In 2015, Karolinska Institutet and Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine (formerly Janssen) initiated a collaboration on Real World Evidence (RWE) with the aim of improving patient health outcomes. The initiative focuses on accelerating research and data analysis, promoting transparency, and improving the application of real-world data. By identifying unmet needs, researchers from both organizations work together to tackle these challenges using their combined expertise and resources.



Partnership At A Glance

More than 50 Abstracts and 30 Publications

Publication of results is at the core of the partnership. The collaboration has so far resulted in 54 abstracts disseminated in a wide range of international conferences and symposia, and 33 published scientific articles. These achievements underscore the profound impact and success of this partnership, highlighting the significant contributions to real-world evidence (RWE) and translational research aimed at improving patient outcomes.



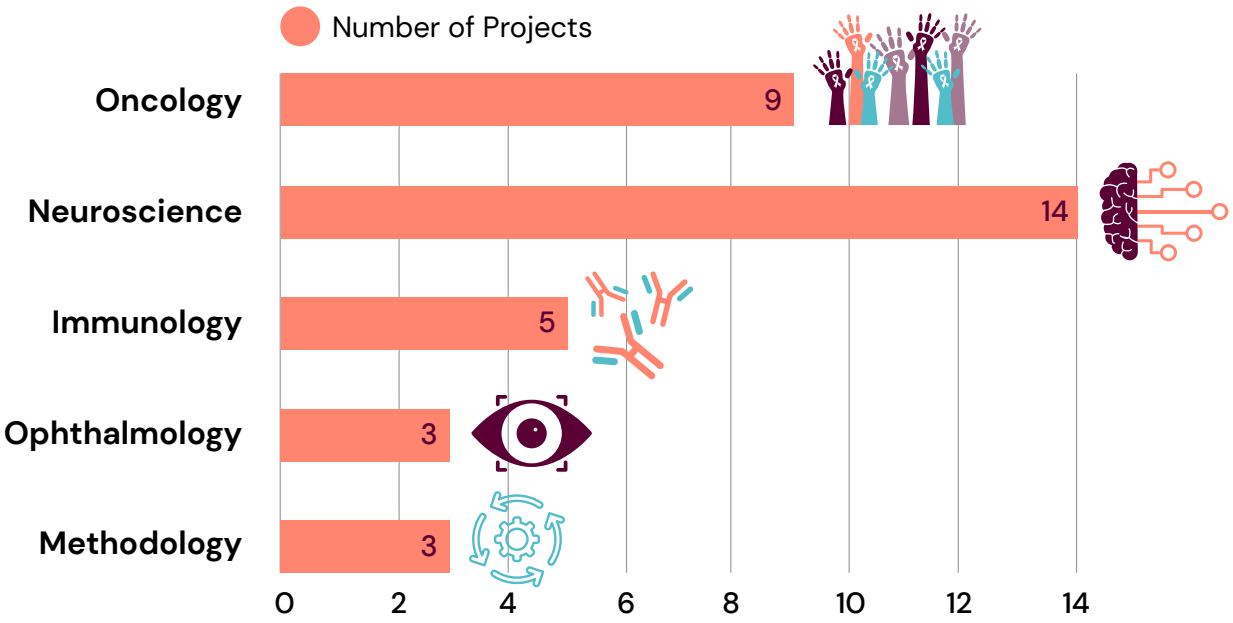
More than 10 Swedish Patient Registries

The research projects have utilized data from more than 10 registries, incorporating unique information from nationwide governmental health registries and national quality registries in Sweden. Published studies have encompassed data on over 725,000 patients, addressing questions that span from the natural history of diseases to treatment outcomes.

Partnership At A Glance

More than 5 Major Areas of Collaboration

Our focus is on several key areas such as oncology, neuroscience - neuropsychiatry, immunology, ophthalmology, and methodology. The aim of joining forces between both organizations is to improve health outcomes and deliver actionable research by integrating research results to improve patient care across these diverse fields.



More than 150 Researchers

More than 150 researchers from the two organizations have collaborated on multiple research initiatives, engaging in 34 projects aimed at addressing various research questions and tackling challenges related to specific disease fields.

The Partnership Over Time

2015

1st Master Collaboration Agreement (MCA) Between Karolinska Institutet and the Global Commercial Strategy Organization of J&J Innovative Medicine (GCSO)

The focus was on real-world evidence studies aiming to improve health outcomes for patients.

Programs & Projects: Treatment Resistant Depression, B-Cell Malignancies, Psoriasis, and Prostate Cancer

2019

1st MCA Renewal Between Karolinska Institutet and GCSO
1st MCA Between Karolinska and Research & Development

The focus has evolved with R&D joining and the partnership has extended the scope of its focus to transnational and biomarker research.

Programs & Projects: Alzheimer Disease, Multiple Myeloma, Lung Cancer, B-Cell Malignancies, Congenital Heart Block

2023

2nd MCA Renewal Between Karolinska Institutet, GCSO and R&D

Tri-party agreement within the Alzheimer Disease program was signed between Karolinska Institutet, R&D, and the Finish Institute of Health and Welfare (THL), in order to allow the use of additional data within the project.

Programs & Projects: Multiple Sclerosis, Myasthenia Gravis, Inherited Retinal Disease, Geographic Atrophy, Prostate Cancer, Idiopathic inflammatory myopathies, Mood and Depression Disorders

2025

3rd MCA Renewal for GCSO and R&D under discussion

Focus on RWE and translational research and possible scope expansion

Abstract and Impact

Karin Smedby Ekström
Professor of Haematology-Oncology, focusing on Clinical Epidemiology at Karolinska Institutet

Incidence of Relapsed/Refractory Diffuse Large B-cell Lymphoma (DLBCL) including CNS Relapse in a Population-based Cohort of 4243 Patients in Sweden

Blood Cancer Journal, 2021

This study is unique in terms of its populations-based design and ability to show incidence and risk factors of relapsed/refractory disease overall and in the CNS in aggressive B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL) in a large completely unselected cohort. The study was selected for oral presentation at ASH in 2019.

Survival by First-line Treatment Type and Timing of Progression Among Follicular Lymphoma Patients: A National Population-based Study in Sweden

Hemasphere, 2023

This population-based study of follicular lymphoma challenges the recent concept of progression of disease within 24 months as being a decisive cutoff for poor prognosis. Here, we clearly show how the prognosis varies continuously with increasing time between diagnosis and progression/relapse. This study has attracted a lot of interest in the scientific lymphoma community.

Abstract and Impact

John Reutfors
Principal Researcher of Clinical Neuroscience
at Karolinska Institutet

Mortality in treatment-resistant unipolar depression: A register-based cohort study in Sweden

Journal of Affective Disorders, 2019

This study revealed that patients with treatment-resistant unipolar depression (TRD; defined as starting a third sequential antidepressant treatment trial) in Sweden face a 35% higher mortality risk, nearly doubled from external causes like suicide, particularly among young adults (18-29) without physical conditions. Cited 71 times and featured in the major Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet, it has prompted follow-up studies in other countries confirming these risks. It has also heightened awareness about TRD within psychiatry.

Risk Factors for Suicide and Suicide Attempts Among Patients With Treatment-Resistant Depression: Nested Case-Control Study

Archives of Suicide Research, 2021

This study of over 15 000 TRD patients in Sweden found that those with recent suicide attempts face a ninefold higher suicide risk and, unexpectedly, that higher education was linked to increased suicide risk. Suicide attempts among TRD patients were associated with substance abuse, personality disorders, and somatic co-morbidity. Awarded the Archives of Suicide Research Best Paper Award for 2021 and cited 41 times, it has advanced the understanding of suicide risks in TRD. It may potentially enhance suicide prevention strategies for high-risk TRD patients.

Abstract and Impact

Miia Kivipelto
Professor of Clinical Geriatrics
at Karolinska Institutet

β-Amyloid, Tau, Neurodegeneration Classification and Eligibility for Anti-amyloid Treatment in a Memory Clinic Population

Neurology, 2022

Newly developed, anti-amyloid antibodies to treat Alzheimer disease (AD) are now available in several countries. This study evaluated the potential eligibility in our realworld memory clinic at the Karolinska University Hospital and found that up to 13% of all patients were potentially eligible for anti-amyloid treatment. The findings underline the complexity of cognitive disorders and contributed to increase the awareness about the need for disease-modifying therapies with other mechanisms of action. The study has received great international recognition and has been presented in numerous conferences.

Brain amyloid load, subjective memory complaints, and cognitive trajectories in older individuals at risk for dementia

European Journal of Neurology, 2024

This study evaluated associations of brain amyloid with 2-year cognitive measures in a trial-ready older general population. Amyloid positivity at baseline (42%) was associated with lower cognitive functioning, and less favorable 2-year cognitive/memory trajectories, but not with other objective or subjective cognitive measures. This study advanced the knowledge on the core AD biomarker, amyloid accumulation, in people at risk of dementia – showing that amyloid may affect objective but not necessarily subjective cognition from a very early at-risk stage, although substantial decline likely requires >2 years to occur. This study has brought attention to prevention trial design and has been presented in several conferences.

Abstract and Impact

Stefan Löfgren
Docent at Karolinska Institutet and Senior Paediatric Ophthalmologist at St. Erik Eye Hospital

Healthcare Resource Utilization in Inherited Retinal Diseases: A Swedish Total Population-based Study 2001-2021

In this nationwide matched cohort study from Sweden (2007–2021), patients with inherited retinal diseases (IRDs) had significantly greater healthcare resource utilization (HCRU) than matched controls. The study identified 5,247 IRD patients and 52,465 comparators matched by age, sex, and region. At diagnosis, IRD patients had lower socioeconomic status and more comorbidities. Over time, they experienced consistently higher rates of outpatient visits and total health-care contacts—especially within five years post-diagnosis. Adjusted incidence rate ratios showed increased risk for outpatient visits (IRR, 1.32; 95% CI, 1.26–1.38) and overall contacts (IRR, 1.28; 95% CI, 1.22–1.34), with no significant differences in hospitalization or drug dispensation. Women and older individuals had the highest utilization rates. These findings underscore the substantial and lasting care needs of individuals with IRD and support prioritizing targeted services and early care coordination strategies to reduce avoidable strain on patients and the healthcare system.

Words from the Partnership Team

Richard Cowburn

Head of the External Engagement Office at KI

"I am very proud of our decade-long partnership with Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine, one of our most successful and valuable collaborations to date. Together, we have created real impact for patients through deeper disease understanding and supporting and advancing new treatments. This journey, marked by evolving strategies and strong governance, has built lasting trust. At KI, we have also gained valuable insights into how to structure cross-sector collaboration based on healthcare data. I look forward to the further achievements in the years ahead."

Johanna Sandling Johansson

Alliance Manager for the Partnership at KI

"As an Alliance Manager, I have had the privilege of supporting a number of collaborative projects within the partnership. This partnership exemplifies the potential of collaborative research, leading to knowledge generation that might not have been realized independently. Regular meetings and open communication ensure that our objectives are aligned, and any challenges can be swiftly addressed. I am proud to be part of this journey and look forward to fostering more such collaborative research that benefits patients."

Photos: Liza Simonsson and Karolinska Institutet

Belen Fraile Ortiz

Chief Data Science Officer, Data Science and Digital Health at J&J Innovative Medicine R&D

"Over the past 10 years, our collaboration with Karolinska Institutet has fueled work across important disease areas and fostered a culture of innovation and knowledge sharing, with the goal of advancing patient care. Our commitment to improving global health continues to inspire us as we tackle pressing health challenges. Thank you to the J&J and KI teams for all the work that you have been doing."

Shane Kavanagh

Vice President, Global Health Economics and RWE at J&J Innovative Medicine

"In May 2025 it will be 10 years since I signed the first collaboration agreement, and in the intervening period years we have renewed and extended our agreement. Within the strategic partnership, we have had numbers of significant collaborations research programs in 9 distinct areas. It has been a dynamic 10 years for patients and with the standards of care and clinical guidelines evolving rapidly in these areas. Looking ahead J&J will continue to lead where medicine is going and our formal partnerships and collaborations with key institutions such as Karolinska Institutet are central to advancing patient care."

Photos: J&J Innovative Medicine

List of Publications

Mood and Depression Disorders
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65375775/?sort=pubdate

B-Cell Malignancies
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65375734/?sort=pubdate

Prostate Cancer
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65408059/?sort=pubdate

Psoriasis
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65408090/?sort=pubdate

Methodology
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65408104/?sort=pubdate

Alzheimer's Disease
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/collections/65408176/?sort=pubdate

Multiple Sclerosis
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38744460/

Photo: Science Photo Library

Questions?
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