

# Integration Plan



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Integration Plan

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## Introduction

The Marqués de Valdecilla Research Institute Foundation (IDIVAL) is a foundation belonging to the regional public sector constituted under Law 50/2002, of December 26, on foundations being its founding institutions are the Government of Cantabria and the University of Cantabria, according to the deed of incorporation of the Foundation of June 18, 2013.

IDIVAL is an institution heir to the Marqués de Valdecilla Training and Research Institute and its activity carried out during the years 2002 to 2013, under the auspices of the Marqués de Valdecilla Foundation, an institution that granted it a legal framework to carry out the activities of the management assignment for biomedical research of the Cantabrian Health Service. which the Government of Cantabria had legislated by Law 7/2002, of 10 December, on Health Planning in Cantabria.

In accordance with its Foundational Statutes, IDIVAL carries out its activities mainly at the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, without prejudice to the fact that for the development of its purposes it may establish relations with other regional, national and international bodies or institutions. Likewise, when required to satisfy the foundational purposes, IDIVAL may also carry out activities in other parts of Spanish territory or foreign States.

IDIVAL is formed following the model of the Health Research Institutes that the result of the association with the teaching and research hospitals of the National Health System, Universities and other Public and Private Research Centers. The aim is to strengthen the hospital as a research centre by providing it with the necessary instruments to resolve the questions that arise in the relationship between the health professional and the patient and the population. IDIVAL, in accordance with the model of Health Research Institutes, has been constituted with the participation of the University of Cantabria both in its governing bodies and in its research groups, and aims to promote research, and the generation of scientific and technological knowledge as key tools for the citizen to be properly cared for within the framework of a quality Health System.

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The Institute currently has 30 research groups belonging to the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, the University of Cantabria and the Foundation itself, grouped into five thematic areas: Transversal Area, Cancer Area, Neurosciences Area, Systems Area and Diagnostic and Therapeutic Media Area.

These research groups are made up of their own staff and attached staff, both researchers, collaborators and technical staff, belonging to the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, the University of Cantabria, the Cantabrian Health Service and the Institute itself. In total they are made up of about 671? members, of which 50? act as Principal Investigators in projects obtained through competitive funding in national or international calls in the last five years.

Of the 30 groups, 18 are made up of Responsible Researchers belonging to the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital and 1 to the Primary Care Management, 8 are led by Group Managers who are professors at the University of Cantabria not linked to the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, that is, without healthcare activity and mostly trained by staff from that university. 2 groups are led by staff researchers of the institution and made up mostly of staff hired by the Institute and 1 group is led by staff of the Ministry of Health.

The new Strategic Plan 2022-2026 proposes a restructuring of areas and groups, so this plan must be an essential operational tool throughout the process.

The physical location of the research groups is divided between the facilities of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, those of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Cantabria, the sixth floor of the School of Nursing of the University of Cantabria, and those of the "IDIVAL Building", the current headquarters of the Foundation and which houses the activity of nine research groups.

Similarly, the research support resources that make up the Central Research Support Unit, which includes the scientific, technical equipment and the provision of technological support services, are located in the facilities of the "IDIVAL Building", others located in the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, and others in the University.

Detailed information about the description and location of the resources of the Central Research Support Unit is included in the Organisational Structure document.

### Purpose and scope

The object and scope of this document is to collect the bases of the participation and collaboration of the different institutions that make up the Institute, including the mechanisms for the incorporation of the entities and the system established for the process of linking researchers and Research Groups of the founding institutions (Government of Cantabria and University of Cantabria) to active lines of R+D+i of the Institute contemplated in its Strategic Plan. as well as the definition of integration mechanisms that allow and ensure the interrelation between the different elements that make up the Institute and the review to ensure the relevance of its results.

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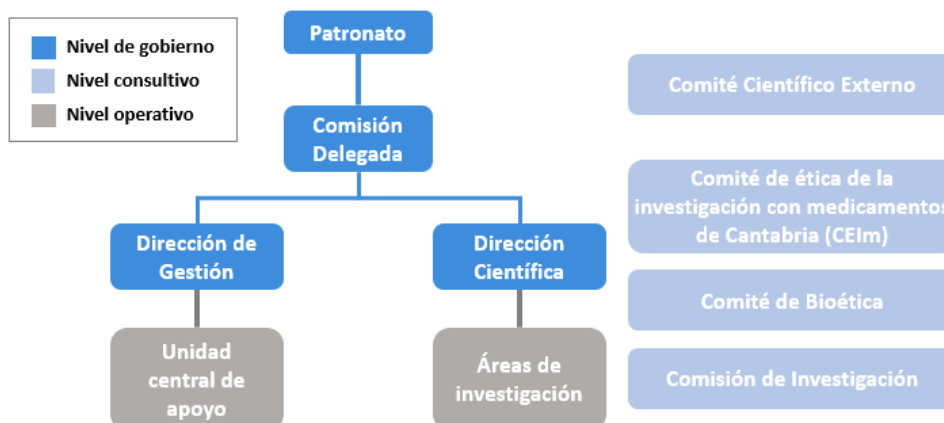
This document describes the integration process that has taken place between the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital and the University of Cantabria, which culminated in 2013 with the creation of a joint organizational, management and scientific structure called the Marqués de Valdecilla Research Institute Foundation.

To this end, it will be necessary to briefly recall the IDIVAL Organisational Structure that is included in the Organisational and Management Structure Map document to allow, for the purposes of this Integration Plan, to have a general vision.

The process of linking research groups from the founding institutions is developed in order to organize the Foundation according to the model of the Health Research Institute, which aims to develop and harmoniously integrate basic, clinical and public health research, promoting translational research with a better transfer of the scientific advances obtained in the prevention and treatment of the most prevalent health problems in our country. The integration of the different types of research will make it possible to limit the interval between the production of new knowledge (efficacy) and its transfer and real applicability (effectiveness and efficiency) in medical practice.

## Participation of the founding institutions in the organizational and management structure of IDIVAL

The structure and organization of IDIVAL is set out in its Statutes. In this way, IDIVAL is structured into three levels: governing bodies, advisory or scientific advisory bodies and operational bodies depending on their competences and functionality. The following is the organisational chart that allows us to have, for the purposes of this Integration Plan, an overview of its structure.



The participation of the founding institutions is reflected both in the governing bodies and in the advisory bodies and operational structures; and within the latter, both at the level of research groups and at the level of the Central Research Support Unit.

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### 1.1. Governing bodies

The governing bodies are divided into collegiate bodies, specifically the Board of Trustees and the Delegate Committee, and single-person bodies.

#### 3.1.1 Board

The Board of Trustees is the governing and representative body of IDIVAL, which will carry out the functions that correspond to it subject to the provisions of the legal system. Its composition and operation are regulated in articles 19 to 31 of the IDIVAL Statutes. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to fulfil the foundational purposes and diligently administer the assets and rights that make up its assets, maintaining their performance and usefulness.

As stated in Article 20 of these Statutes, the members of the Board of Trustees represent both the Government of Cantabria, the University of Cantabria and the rest of the founding institutions:

- The Minister responsible for health matters of the Government of Cantabria;
- The Rector of the University of Cantabria;
- The Managing Director of the Cantabrian Health Service;
- The Vice-Chancellor responsible for research and knowledge transfer of the University of Cantabria;
- The Managing Director of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital.

The Board of Trustees will also be made up of the following nine elected members:



- Two persons appointed by the Minister responsible for health matters of the Government of Cantabria;
- Two people appointed by the Rector of the University of Cantabria;
- Three people appointed by the Managing Director of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital;
- Two researchers of recognised competence, appointed by common agreement by the Minister responsible for health matters of the Government of Cantabria and by the Rector of the University.

The composition of the IDIVAL Board of Trustees may increase with the subsequent incorporation of new members, following a statutory modification in accordance with the legal provisions as regulated by the Statutes of the Marqués de Valdecilla Research Institute Foundation. The new members will be appointed and replaced by agreement of the Board of Trustees, at the proposal, where appropriate, of the corresponding institution or position according to the appointment formula established in the new statutes (art. 20 of the IDIVAL Statutes).

### **3.1.2 Executive Committee**

The Delegate Committee acts as the governing body by delegation of the Board of Trustees and will be made up of six members of the Board of Trustees and its composition and operation is regulated in articles 32 and 33 of the Statutes of IDIVAL. The founding institutions are represented in it as follows:

- The Managing Director of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital who will act as President of the same.
- Three representatives of the Health Administration.
- Two representatives of the University of Cantabria.

### **3.1.3 Directores**

The Scientific Directorate and the Management Directorate constitute the single-person governing bodies. The functions of both positions are described in articles 34 to 36 of the IDIVAL Statutes and in the Regulations of Organization and Operation.

Firstly, in accordance with Article 34 of the Foundational Statutes, the Board of Trustees and the Scientific and Management Directors will be appointed by the free appointment system for a maximum initial period of 4 years, being possible to renew them for successive periods of equal duration. In the event of the illness of the Scientific Director, he will be replaced in his functions by the Director of Management.

Secondly, in accordance with Article 36 of IDIVAL's Foundation Statutes, it is the responsibility of the person in charge of the Management Directorate to direct, organise, coordinate and develop the activities of the Institute, executing the directives of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.

## **1.2. Advisory bodies**

### **1.2.1. Own advisory bodies**





The External Scientific Council and the Internal Scientific Council, as their own advisory bodies, do not have management or representation functions of IDIVAL.

The External Scientific Council, being an advisory body, is responsible for advising on the scientific activities of the Institute and ensuring its scientific quality. Its composition and operation is regulated in Article 37 of the IDIVAL Statutes. This body is made up of a minimum of three members, although in recent years it has been composed of a president and 10 members of recognized international level and after the approval of the IDIVAL board of trustees, at the proposal of the scientific management of IDIVAL.

The Internal Scientific Council, also as an advisory body, is responsible for advising the Directorate in the development of its functions. Its composition and operation are regulated in Article 38 of the IDIVAL Statutes and in Article 14 of the Regulations of Organization and Operation of IDIVAL. As described in the aforementioned article 38, this body must be made up of a minimum of three researchers from the Institute's Research Groups and directed by the Scientific Director. The current composition of the Internal Scientific Council, with 15 members, guarantees the reinforced presence of the University of Cantabria, given that in addition to the coordinators of each of the Research Areas, it has two representatives of the University of Cantabria. Likewise, the teaching and quality coordinators are part of the Internal Scientific Council.

### **1.2.2. External Advisory Bodies**

In accordance with the Regulations on the Organisation and Operation of IDIVAL, the Institute may have External Committees with a consultative nature. At the present time it has two external committees: the Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Cantabria and the Bioethics Committee of the University of Cantabria.

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The Cantabria Medicines Research Ethics Committee (CEIm) is an independent body, made up of health professionals and non-health members, responsible for ensuring the protection of the rights, safety and well-being of subjects participating in clinical trials and offering public assurance in this regard. These objectives are ensured by an opinion on the trial protocol, the suitability of the investigators and the adequacy of the facilities, as well as the methods and documents to be used to inform the trial subjects in order to obtain their informed consent. The territorial scope of the CEIC-C covers the territory of the Autonomous Community of Cantabria. Its composition and operation are regulated by its own regulations.

The UC Bioethics Committee is responsible for issuing reports on projects and assessing activities that involve animal experimentation or the use of biological agents or genetically modified organisms. The Committee shall ensure that the use of the latter does not pose a risk to the personnel concerned or to the environment. It will also be responsible for ensuring compliance with good practices related to the use of animals and preparing reports for the governing bodies of the University on the ethical-legal problems that may arise in research and teaching. The composition and operation of the Bioethics Committee of the University of Cantabria is regulated in its own regulations.

The participation of the founding institutions in each of these governing bodies and advisory bodies is perfectly regulated in the articles and points of the Statutes, Regulations of the Organization and Operation and Organizational Structure of IDIVAL and in the respective rules



of operation and can be verified by reading the Minutes drawn up in reference to each of the meetings held.

### 1.3. Operational bodies

IDIVAL has five research areas in which all the scientific groups that the Institute has are encompassed and distributed. This research structure allows the optimization of synergies between research groups of the different entities, being able to find the maximum number of collaborations between them.

The five major areas of research are listed below:

- Systems Area.
- Area of Neurosciences.
- Cancer Area.
- Area of Diagnostic and Therapeutic Means.
- Cross-sectional area.

## Process of incorporation and dismissal of Researchers and Research Groups from the Foundation

### 1.4. Definition of research groups and researchers on staff

#### 1.4.1. Research Groups

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The IDIVAL Research Groups are the basic units of research structuring and are made up of staff of the Institute itself or attached to the Institute, who, regardless of the institution or entity to which they belong, have scientific affinity and carry out their activity under the direction, supervision or parameters set by the Researcher in Charge of the group. The group must be defined by its research theme and not necessarily by its healthcare or departmental link. Groups must act within an IDIVAL Research Area.

Research Groups are regulated in the Regulations on the Organisation and Operation of IDIVAL and, as stated therein, the consideration of Research Group will allow the name as such to be used publicly and access to its facilities, institutional and organisational support and the measures to promote IDIVAL that may be appropriate in each case.

IDIVAL's Research Groups, as reflected in the Regulations, are classified as:

**Consolidated.** Groups with their own relevant stable scientific production, projects with stable external competitive funding for at least the last five years, and with technical or research staff who exclusively carry out research tasks.

**Emerging.** Groups with research activity recently formed as such that have been carrying out their activity for less than three years. An IDIVAL group cannot be emerging for more than three years since at the end of this period it must be classified after the corresponding evaluation by the External Scientific Council as Associate or Consolidated. Exceptionally, the External Council may maintain an Emerging Group after the evaluation after three years, another two years in this condition.



**Associated.** Research Groups with more than three years of experience that, in the opinion of the External Scientific Council, do not reach the thresholds that allow them to be framed within the category of Consolidated Group.

**Transverse.** They will exist without the need for classification and without the need to be framed in a specific Research Area. The Transversal Research Groups are characterized by the fact that their research activity is carried out with the consideration of basic for other groups and with a transversal theme.

**Recently created.** Groups that have a history of more than three years so that they cannot be considered as Emerging but that are integrated into the institute de novo without reaching the lintels of the Consolidated Groups. An IDIVAL group cannot be newly created for more than three years, since at the end of this period it must be classified after the corresponding evaluation by the External Scientific Council as Associate or Consolidated.

**In transition.** Consolidated groups with a decrease in scientific production and that in the periodic evaluation are granted a period of rethinking of the lines and activity to maintain the category of consolidated. If they do not achieve it, they would lose the category as a group.

#### 1.4.2. Staff Researchers

The Regulations for the Organisation and Operation of IDIVAL establish the composition of the Research Groups, defining the figures of the Group Responsible Researcher, Co-Responsible Researcher, Principal Investigator, Collaborating Researcher, Technical and Nursing staff.

Principal Investigators, Joint Principal Investigators or Principal Investigators with stable contracts and financed in whole or at least in part by the Institute's structural funds are referred to as Staff Investigators.

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### 1.5. Process of linking and disassociating Research Groups and Researchers of the Foundation

#### 1.5.1. Research Group Linking Process

The initial groups of the Institute were formed by a call made in 2009, Subsequently, the current composition of 29 groups distributed in 5 areas has been made from the individual applications and departures developed through the procedure by which the Groups are linked to the Institute that is included in article 19 of the IDIVAL Regulations.

The linking process was formalised through the approval by the Board of Trustees of the configuration of Research Groups that make up the Marqués de Valdecilla Training and Research Institute, the predecessor research management body of the Marqués de Valdecilla Research Institute Foundation, and the current configuration assumed by IDIVAL through the approval of the organisational structure map by its Board of Trustees.

The process of linking a new Research Group as linked to IDIVAL begins through the Group Leader, who must be a Researcher from one of the Founding Institutions. This Group Leader addresses a request to the Scientific Director expressing this desire to link a new Research Group to IDIVAL, which must meet the following characteristics:



1. It will be signed by the person in charge or leader and the rest of the members of the group who will also recognize him or her as responsible.
2. The request must be made by filling in a specific form that will be requested from the IDIVAL Management in which at least the following information on the research activity of the Research Group will be included:
  - a. Identification data of the Group Leader;
  - b. The composition of the research groups;
  - c. Most relevant scientific publications of the last five years, indicating their impact factor and quartile or decile;
  - d. Projects obtained through competitive calls in the last five years, specifying the principal investigator, the amount received and the duration of the projects;
  - e. Participation in research networks and CIBER;
  - f. Promoted patents;
  - g. Participation in clinical practice guidelines;
  - h. Brief description of the group's research activity at present;
  - i. Development plan;
3. The Management of IDIVAL may request the CVs of those members of the group that it deems relevant and in the formats that are appropriate.
4. It must be countersigned by the person in charge of the institution to which it belongs in each case.
5. It must be informed by the Internal Scientific Council.
6. The evaluation of the group will be carried out by the External Scientific Council, which will consider the group in one of the categories and areas of IDIVAL.
7. The status of IDIVAL group will be acquired by the acceptance as such of the Scientific Management of IDIVAL, and will be communicated to the Board of Trustees.

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#### **1.5.2. Process of disengagement from Research Groups**

A group incorporated as an Emerging Entity will not be able to continue to be so in a subsequent evaluation that will be carried out 3 years later, to which two more years may be added by recommendation of the External Scientific Council. If, after this time, the results of the evaluation process show a trend in the group that will not indicate the improvement in the results and its future consolidation as a research group, it is the duty of the management to inform the emerging group of this situation and the risk of breaking the link with the group the following year if no measures have been taken to correct the deviations.

The status of Research Group will be lost when one or more of the following circumstances occur:

- By written resignation of the Group Manager.
- Due to loss of consideration decided by the Board of Trustees at the proposal of the Scientific Director, after a process ruled by the External Scientific Council.

#### **1.5.3. Incorporation and departure of personnel to Research Groups**

As indicated in the IDIVAL Regulations, the incorporation or departure of members of the group must be communicated by the Group Manager to the Scientific Director of IDIVAL or through the update of the composition of the group in the Annual Activity Report, in which the new members must add a letter that endorses it. This incorporation will be reviewed and validated, where appropriate, by the Scientific Director, who may require additional information in this regard.



## **1.6. Periodic monitoring and evaluation of Researchers and Research Groups**

### **1.6.1. Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation of Research Groups**

The scientific trajectory of the IDIVAL Groups will be evaluated periodically, optimally every five years. These evaluations may require a public presentation by the Head of each group on its composition, lines of research, scientific production, applicability of results and any other information that is relevant in the opinion of the Scientific Management and the External Scientific Council.

For the evaluation, the required documentation will be submitted to the Scientific Director who, once examined, will send it to the External Scientific Council. In the event of the absence of any document or information, the Group Manager will be required to provide it, which must be made within a period of one month. Any Research Group may require evaluation by the External Scientific Council in order to confirm its condition or modify its rating. In this defence before the Council, special emphasis will be placed on the group's development plan for the next 5 years.

### **1.6.2. Regular monitoring and evaluation of staff researchers**

The Regulations on the Organisation and Operation of IDIVAL establish the composition of the Research Groups, defining the figures of the Group Responsible Researcher, Co-Responsible Researcher, IDIVAL Researcher and Collaborating Researcher.

The research staff belonging to IDIVAL's Research Groups, i.e. those who maintain an employment relationship with IDIVAL, will be periodically evaluated in aspects related to their scientific performance. The External Scientific Council will participate in this evaluation and will mainly take into consideration the following aspects:

- a. Translational and collaborative nature of the lines of research.
- b. Active national and international projects with competitive funding, differentiating between those developed as a responsible researcher and as a collaborator.
- c. Published works, differentiating between national and international ones, with an impact factor in the first deci/quartile, and as the first or last author in the first decile/quartile of impact.
- d. Membership of collaboration networks and written collaboration agreements, both regional, national or international, and those that involve funding and not.
- e. Transfers of their research activity reflected in patents applied for and active in which they participate as an inventor and income from royalties.

Three years from the date of the initial contract, an evaluation must be made. The evaluation will be periodic thereafter, every 4 years.

## **Integration mechanisms between the Units that make up IDIVAL**

IDIVAL has identified and implemented a series of mechanisms to promote and consolidate integration between the different Units and levels that constitute it, Institutions, health fields, Research Areas, Research Groups, and the people within the groups. These mechanisms are



reflected in the founding statutes and in the Regulations of Organization and Operation of IDIVAL.

Among the integration mechanisms identified are:

- The participation of the founding institutions in the organization and governance of IDIVAL at all levels (organizational integration);
- The protection of Emerging Groups;
- The integration of Primary Care and Nursing research;
- Integration for post-MIR researchers (López Albo and Río Hortega programs);
- The system defined in the Communication Plan;
- Grants for Research Projects in Cooperation;
- The System established for the use of and access to support facilities and infrastructures;
- The Activity Report as a comprehensive and public report on the Institute's activity;
- The Contribution of the Training Plan to the integration of Research Groups;
- Systematic reevaluation and linking of Research Groups;
- The permanence of research staff in training in IDIVAL laboratories.

#### **1.7. Participation of the founding Institutions in the organization and governance of the Foundation (Organizational integration)**

The participation in its governing bodies, its advisory bodies, the operational structures and the central structure of the research support of the founding institutions of IDIVAL guarantee their integration as set out in the section "Participation of the Founding Institutions in the Organisational and Management Structure of the Foundation" of this document. In addition, as stated in this section, the current composition of the Board of Trustees, Delegate Commission and Internal Council has a balanced presence of the Founding Institutions that guarantees their representation.

At other levels, this integration is also made effective through the recognition of the Bioethics Committee of the University of Cantabria, as well as the participation of researchers belonging to the University in the Scientific Management of certain Technological Support Services (Confocal Microscopy and Transmission Electron Microscopy).

The University of Cantabria is integrated into the operational structures (Research Areas and Research Groups) through different relationships. On the one hand, the existence of Groups whose Group Leaders belong to the University of Cantabria, and Groups with Heads of Clinical Groups that integrate members in their group who belong to the University of Cantabria, is recognized. Likewise, the Research Groups are grouped into research areas, some of whose Area Coordinators also belong to the University of Cantabria.

The University of Cantabria also provides the following infrastructures to the Institute's technological services through an agreement between the IDIVAL Board of Trustees and the Board of Trustees of 27 May 2014:

1. Platforms included in the scientific-technical research services (SCTI) of the University of Cantabria:
  - Animal Housing and Experimentation Service (SEEA).
  - Material Characterization Service (SERCAMAT).
  - Transmission optical microscopy service (SERMET).
  - Supercomputing service.



- Hydrology Laboratory (Hydraulics I.).
- Chromatography service.
- 2. Other platforms offering services to external users:
  - Advanced Microscopy (IBBTEC).
    - Leica TCS SP5 Ultraspectral Confocal Inverted Microscope (5 laser lines and equipped for live cell).
    - Leica TCS SPE Confocal Spectral Microscope (4 laser lines).
    - Leica AF 6500 Epifluorescent Inverted Microscope equipped with high-speed camera and for live cell.
    - Leica LMD 6000 laser microdissector equipped with epifluorescence.
    - Zeiss direct epifluorescence microscope with camera.
    - Fluorescence stereoscope microscope.
  - Massive Sequencing Service (IBBTEC):
    - Generation of gene libraries and sequencing of RNA-seq, DNA-chip, exomes and bacterial genomes.
    - Two sequencers.
  - Flow Cytometry (School of Medicine)

### 1.8. Staff integration

IDIVAL has in its groups and Central Research Support Unit personnel belonging to the founding institutions (linked personnel) and with personnel dependent on IDIVAL itself. The Regulations on the Organisation and Operation of IDIVAL regulate the Foundation's personnel regime. Therefore, the Foundation has its own staff (hired by the Foundation), who may be researchers, technicians or managers; and assigned personnel (belonging to the Public Health System of Cantabria and the University of Cantabria).

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These personnel will maintain the legal regime that, in each case, is applicable, depending on the entity to which they depend. Therefore, each Contracting Institution will effectively exercise the powers of the employer in terms of setting hours, granting of leave, holidays and permits, as well as the exercise of inspection, management and disciplinary powers. Without prejudice to the foregoing, the Foundation, in the exercise of its powers, may seek the reasoned opinion of the other Institutions in order to properly fulfil the functions of each service or unit where the contracted personnel are integrated.

Apart from their institutional dependence, all the Foundation's research and teaching staff enjoy equal rights in terms of subsidy regime, use of infrastructures and management and participation in projects and contracts.

Compliance with the ethical principles and commonly accepted methodological criteria, as well as respect for and consideration for colleagues and governing bodies and management, must preside over the actions of the staff integrated into the Foundation (see Code of Quality, Ethics and Good Scientific Practices).

### 1.9. Integration of Emerging Groups

The Mentorship Plan for Emerging Groups describes a series of actions developed in IDIVAL aimed at promoting emerging researchers and the integration of new linked groups, as well as the evolution, through different processes, from emerging groups to consolidated groups. To this end, mechanisms are established to guarantee a stable source of financing for this purpose





and the provision of technology and the methodological and statistical support necessary for its development to these groups.

The promoting and facilitating actions are described in detail in the Guardianship Plan for Emerging Groups and are classified as follows:

- Actions aimed at attracting and retaining talent.
- Actions aimed at the promotion and training of Emerging Groups and researchers.
- Actions aimed at consolidating the financing of Emerging Groups.
- Actions aimed at consolidating research activity and increasing the visibility of Emerging Groups.

The Guardianship Plan for Emerging Groups establishes a series of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the integration of these groups that are included within the mechanisms of Integration.

### **1.10. Integration of Post-MIR Researchers**

The Aid Programme for the recruitment of specialist doctors called "Wenceslao López Albo", in force since 2002, is the tool that allows and promotes the integration of post-MIR research staff in the Foundation. This type of financing has been and is the star of a package of aid for doctors who have completed their residency. This programme is complemented by the post-MIR programme "Río Horteiga" funded by the ISCIII.

The specific objective of the post-MIR contracts is to promote the incorporation and progressive participation of excellent health professionals, who have completed the period of specialized training in any hospital of the public network of the NHS, to the translational research and care innovation activity of the Autonomous Community of Cantabria.

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The satisfactory development of the project may serve for its subsequent integration into any of the centres of the Cantabrian Health Service with full respect for the principles of publicity, equality, merit and capacity that must govern the public sector.

The specific objective of the Post-MIR End-of-Residency Contracts for Research Projects is the training and development of the research skills demonstrated by health professionals with higher degrees who have completed the period of Specialized Health Training in health centers and institutions within the scope of the Cantabrian Health Service. Their incorporation into the groups includes partial care activity so that the research has an even more translational component.

The reports and analyses carried out allow us to recognize the final integration of researchers in training in the operational structure, forming part of the Institute's Research Groups and generating publications in cooperation with clinical research staff from the HUMV, as well as from the University of Cantabria.

Their activity during periods of external stay must transcend the possibility of establishing agreements and/or strategic alliances with other research centres and cooperative research structures. The consideration of the staff hired post-MIR as members of the Research Groups is considered as one of the parameters to be included in the calculation of the annual productivity aid to the research group.





### **1.11. Communication Plan**

IDIVAL has a Communication Plan where all the actions it develops are described with the firm intention of involving the research groups in the plans, results achieved and programmed activities, novelties and most important news of the Institute.

Among the different actions included in the Communication Plan are a series of spaces designed for the meeting (General Sessions of the HUMV, Santander Biomedical Lectures, Progress Report, Synergies, area meetings, etc.). Through these points of interaction, research groups can identify opportunities for collaboration and parallel lines of research offered by them to research together in the same aspect or integrate researchers from different groups in the same project.

IDIVAL has also made available to all members of the Institute a newsletter, called "Innovation Bulletin", with a weekly publication periodicity and which is sent by email to all researchers, support and management staff, as well as being available on the website. Other communication tools included in the Communication Plan are the Scientific Reports, the Strategic Plan and other institutional documents, press kits, etc.

However, the Institute's communication tool par excellence is the website, which is permanently updated (completely renewed in 2023) and available to any user. The contents include the results of the activity, news related to its organisation and field of action, news of interest about the sector and our fields of action and relevant documentation of the Institute.

### **1.12. Integration of research support facilities and infrastructures**

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The availability of use and access to IDIVAL's support infrastructures is guaranteed under equal conditions for all types of consolidated, emerging, associated clinical groups and for clinical and basic groups, coming from any of the founding Institutions is described in the Regulations for the Use of IDIVAL Facilities and in the Regulations for the Organization and Operating Standards of Technological Services.

In addition, IDIVAL has a specific procedure approved by the Internal Scientific Council and the Board of Trustees of the Marqués de Valdecilla Foundation used for the designation of the spaces to be assigned to the research groups that have been located in the "IDIVAL Building".

This framework of action has been regulated to establish the criteria for the allocation of available spaces in the "IDIVAL Building": 2675 m<sup>2</sup> distributed over four levels (levels 0 to 3), and are applicable to research groups that apply to locate in the aforementioned facilities. The criteria are based on the existence of staff dedicated to research, preferential distribution by thematic areas, scientific production and the existence of spaces that the group already has.

In any case, the assignment is decided on equal terms with respect to the origin of the Group and by definition these are shared spaces that favour communication, relationship and the sharing of the research activity of each group. The Allocation of Spaces procedure, PR-GNR-03, defines the system to be followed in this aspect.

The research support infrastructures available in the IDIVAL building are located on floor 0. They are composed of: node of soluble samples and nucleic acids of the biobank, microscopy unit,

flow cytometry unit and cell separation. In addition, on floor 3, the management teams of the central support unit are distributed to all IDIVAL researchers.

The Marquesa de Pelayo Library, Library of the Cantabrian Health Service, is considered to be an active centre of biomedical information resources whose mission is to provide quality library services to contribute to innovation and excellence in the care, learning and research activity of the Public Health System of Cantabria. The Marquesa de Pelayo Library is made available to the Institute's researchers in health sciences and is organizationally considered a technological support service made available to the Research Groups.

IDIVAL, through the Collaboration Agreement between the University of Cantabria and the Marqués de Valdecilla Foundation, for the coordination of access to the services of the Library of the University of Cantabria and the Marquesa de Pelayo Library (signed on 31 July 2013), guarantees access to the collections of the Marquesa de Pelayo Library for those members of the Research Groups belonging to the staff of the UC.

Access under equal conditions between the members of the Research Groups belonging to the SCS and those of the UC staff is manifested by granting both groups in the same way a non-transferable individual access code whose use implies the same coverage of services and availability of use.

Likewise, other spaces that IDIVAL has are the Teaching Pavilion (pavilion 16) of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital, entirely dedicated to teaching (where the aforementioned Marquesa de Pelayo library is located), the Clinical Trials Unit (pavilion 15), chromatography unit (floor -1, tower B) and the Nodes of Solid Samples and Neurological Tissues of the Biobank, located in the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital (floor -2, Pathological Anatomy Service). All of them are signposted as IDIVAL spaces.

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### **1.13. IDIVAL Activity Report**

All the research results of the Groups will be included in the Activity Report, including those of the new linked groups. This information made available to all Groups through the website guarantees access by all groups to the Institute's research results.

The information relating to the research results will be provided by the Research Groups and required by the Scientific Management for the preparation of the Institute's Activity Report. Likewise, this information is used to calculate the remuneration of each Research Group, granted through the "Support Programme", which seeks to enhance the research trajectory of the IDIVAL Groups.

The Support is articulated through a formula that allows the calculation of the remuneration obtained for the achievement of certain thresholds in the value of each of these factors and weighted according to the relative importance of each factor in the set of indicators of research excellence of a research group. This formula is reviewed annually by the Internal Scientific Council in order to promote the Institute's research in line with the provisions of the Strategic Plan.



#### **1.14. Contribution of the Training Plan to the integration of Research Groups**

Among the principles that govern the Training Plan is the duty to facilitate interaction and collaboration between the different researchers and research groups of the Institute to promote translational research. In this way, the recipients of the Training Plan include all stakeholders:

- Professionals of the system in training: MIR, BIR, FIR, etc.
- Healthcare professionals with clinical, basic, epidemiological and/or health services research activity.
- Research professionals.
- Undergraduate, Master's or Doctoral students.
- Emerging groups and new post-doctoral researchers.
- Consolidated researchers.
- Primary Care professionals from the territory in which IDIVAL concentrates research activity.
- Personal técnico de apoyo (asistencial, administrativetrativo y de soporte a la investigación).

It is worth noting that various activities developed in the Training Plan, such as the Santander Biomedical Lectures, Synergies and Progress Report programme, have been developed in collaboration with the University of Cantabria and the IBBTEC.

#### **1.15. Permanence of Researchers in training in laboratories of Research Group**

Aligned with the objective of integrating clinical and university researchers as interest groups in training actions, both in the advanced stages of their development as research professionals and in the early stages, there is an interest in the laboratories of the Institute's Research Groups hosting students from the degrees in Medicine, Biomedical Sciences, Biology, Pharmacy, Chemistry, etc., in their undergraduate or postgraduate internship periods.

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In this way, the focus of the trajectories of these students towards professions compatible with research is enhanced, arousing interest in it and increasing the scientific vocation, serving in turn as a quarry for the new generations of pre-doc researchers in the IDIVAL Groups.

In this line, IDIVAL has a summer internship program for students in their last years of undergraduate studies that is launched nationwide.

#### **1.16. Integration of Nursing and Primary Care in IDIVAL**

The integration of Primary Care and Nursing in the Institute is approached from several points of view:

1. Integration of the project management of Nursing calls (national nursing award) in IDIVAL.
2. Prioritization of Primary Care and Nursing in a systematic way in the calls for IDIVAL grants, in its various modalities: Next-Val, Inn-Val, intensification. It should also be noted that IDIVAL makes specific helplines available to Primary Care and Nursing, such as Prim-Val and Valdecilla Nursing, respectively.
3. Participation of IDIVAL as a promoter in nursing dissemination forums (Innovation Conferences).

4. Integration of Primary Care and Nursing staff in IDIVAL Research Groups. The final objective is to integrate researchers not only in the specific cross-cutting groups of Primary Care or Nursing, but within each of the other 28 groups of the institute.

### **1.17. Integration of the Institute into the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital**

The integration of Health Research Institutes as structures consubstantial to Hospitals, which are their nucleus, is an indispensable desideratum. Integration into IDIVAL is promoted through various strategies:

1. Participation of the Hospital's management structure in the management bodies. The management of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital is part of the IDIVAL Board of Trustees and holds the presidency of the Delegate Committee.
2. Participation of the Hospital's staff in IDIVAL's governing bodies. The Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital is represented on the Board of Trustees
3. Participation of information from evaluation and advisory bodies. The management of the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital is systematically invited to the meetings of the IDIVAL Internal Council, and participates in the strategic evaluation of various calls for aid of the Institute (call for intensification, Innval call, DTS call).
4. IDIVAL aid programme. The IDIVAL aid program has its development core at the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital and as such, calls are required or prioritized to develop in whole or in part in it.
5. Training program. The IDIVAL training program considers, both in its physical execution, as well as its agents and the target to which it is directed, the Marqués de Valdecilla University Hospital. The execution of the Progress Reports, Sinergias and Santander Biomedical Lectures programmes have been integrated with the Hospital's activity. The latter programme is interspersed in the calendar with the weekly Hospital sessions themselves (last Thursday of each month), while the other two have a fortnightly periodicity. Along with these programmes, IDIVAL promotes two other cross-cutting training activities: the Good Practices in Clinical Research course and the IDIVAL Forum (focused on and organised by research groups with an international and online character).

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## **Evaluation and monitoring of the Integration Plan**

On an annual basis, the Institute's Scientific Directorate and Management Directorate will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the integration mechanisms described in this document, with the aim of continuing to advance in the integration of all the elements that make up IDIVAL. The conclusions will be forwarded to the advisory and management bodies.



