



Swiss Research Network of
Clinical Pediatric Hubs



13th Annual Report 2025

SwissPedNet

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Editorial

Dear reader,

SwissPedNet underwent quite some change in 2025, leading to a more interconnected network and increased momentum. The first year of the new funding period started with the good news of continued government funding and subsequent concretization of aims and budget. We are grateful and proud that the value and relevance of SwissPedNet for the pediatric clinical research environment in Switzerland is recognized by the State Secretariat of Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

Based on the negotiations and finalization of the Service Level Agreement with SERI, which also includes government funding to the Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation (SCTO), a re-organisation of the SwissPedNet Coordination Office has been implemented. SCTO and SwissPedNet have jointly decided to separate the SwissPedNet Coordinator position from the SCTO Executive Office, leading to an independent set-up of the SwissPedNet Coordination Office towards the end of 2025.

Besides this organizational change in the Coordination Office, some of the initiatives started in 2024 already paid off. Early 2025, the numbers from the annual reporting, collected for the first time in a REDCap database, provided valuable and quantifiable insight into the activities of the network.

Further, at the General Assembly 2025, a number of associate members were welcomed to the network - we are very happy about this growth of SwissPedNet and are looking forward to advance the Swiss pediatric clinical research environment and its activities with joined forces.

In addition, the NextGen Research Day also underwent some improvement and a re-fresh of some of the workshops. On May 21, 2025, young pediatric researchers met in Bern for a day full of hands-on workshops, discussions, 1:1 presentations and a roundtable featuring experts on AI and Big Data in pediatric research. The project team does not tire to put new ideas into implementation – stay tuned for the final program of the 2026 edition of the NextGen Research Day.

With this report we summarize our activities and highlights during 2025, we wish enjoyable reading!



Prof. Matthias Baumgartner
President SwissPedNet

SwissPedNet Highlights and Activities in 2025

For the SERI funding period 2025-2028, five goals have been defined between SERI and SwissPedNet:

1. Conduct pediatric clinical research projects and studies
2. Enhance collaboration and internationalization
3. Enhance further use of pediatric clinical research data
4. Implement patient-public involvement (PPI) in pediatric clinical research
5. Supporting and educating pediatric clinician researchers

SwissPedNet's activities towards the end of the last funding period (2021-2024) prepared the ground for the current focus. In 2025, a number of activities allowed SwissPedNet to reach the next level for some of the aims defined in the SERI SLA 2025-2028.

By 1st October 2025, the University Children's Hospital Zürich (Kispi Zürich) took over administration of the employment of the SwissPedNet Coordination Office from the SCTO. Further, also the administration of SwissPedNet government funds is provided by Kispi Zürich. Anna Naef continues her work for SwissPedNet in the role of Geschäftsführerin / Executive Manager. The last quarter of 2025 she was very busy setting up an independent IT and working environment for SwissPedNet, allowing improved collaboration processes within the network. Employees of SwissPedNet members will have access to SwissPedNet documents and to a collaborative work environment in MS Teams, based on a pre-defined access structure. This IT environment, completely independent from Kispi Zürich, additionally ensures a sustainable work environment, unrelated to the organization of employment of SwissPedNet Coordination Office staff.

With these organizational developments SwissPedNet increased its agility and fitness to meet the demands of pediatric clinical research in Switzerland and boosted its momentum for the projects and activities in the years to come.

1. Conduct pediatric clinical research projects and studies

Thanks to continued government funding, SwissPedNet was able to support its ordinary members with government funds also in 2025. These funds are used to maintain and develop local research infrastructures and thus directly support the quantity and quality of pediatric clinical research projects in Switzerland.

At the end of 2024, a REDCap database had been developed and provided for the annual reporting of SwissPedNet members. Even though introduced at the very last moment, all members very flexibly adapted to the new database and entered their research and development activities comprehensively in the database. This allowed valuable insights into the achievements of the network.

Some of the highlights are shared here:

In 2024, **217 unique projects** have been supported by local SwissPedNet research infrastructure with at least 1 day of service.

Minor support has been offered to **240 small projects**, mostly local single-center trials. These smaller projects enable researchers to answer individual research questions and collect experience in managing a research project.

The number of projects is highly relevant. Complexity in research is generally increasing, leading to increased efforts for individual projects and thus potentially to a reduced number of projects that can be run by each infrastructure. Still, we push for a high number of projects and diverse research questions. Each additional research project gives access to research to an additional subgroup of the pediatric patient population, making innovative treatments accessible or generating data that might improve the treatment of specific indications.

An analysis of the larger projects revealed a proportion of **76% of academic research projects**, answering questions that arise from daily care and not developed at pharmaceutical companies.

Two thirds of the larger projects supported by the SwissPedNet infrastructure were **multicentric trials**, about half of them international.

Of these multicentric trials, an important project is the SNSF IICT funded [MYTHIC study](#). This study investigates the use of antibiotics in childhood pneumonia caused by mycoplasma, potentially having an impact on antibiotic prescription, and thus leading to reduced emergence of antimicrobial resistance in children with pneumonia. Recruitment started in February 2025 at the first sites of Switzerland – all 10 clinical members of SwissPedNet are supporting the trial, 9/10 have been opened by the end of 2025.

Almost **4000 pediatric patients** have been recruited in clinical research trials all over SwissPedNet in 2025, some of them gaining access to innovative treatments and extended care and all of them creating data for evidence-based medical decision-making.

2. Enhance collaboration and internationalization

In 2025, collaboration was cultivated on many levels. In April 2025, the European funded project [conect4children \(c4c\)](#) invited to a final meeting in Venice. Anna Naef, who had represented Switzerland in the project, attended the meeting and strengthened relationships with the project team and national networks of other European countries. These relationships are maintained beyond the project and enable regular exchange and sharing of experience across Europe. The management and continuation of the pan-European pediatric research infrastructure developed in the c4c project has been taken over by [c4c-Stichting](#) (c4c-S). SwissPedNet has been a contributing member of c4c-S since February 2025.

Through c4c-Stichting requests for pediatric trial services regularly reach Switzerland. In 2025, requests for early outreach information, site identification as well as feasibility assessments of Swiss sites have successfully been completed and led to Swiss sites being included in international pediatric trials.

Also on European level the membership at [European Network of Paediatric Research at EMA](#) (Enpr-EMA) plays an important role. SwissPedNet finally fulfilled all recognition criteria, has been confirmed as a “category 1 member” early 2025 and has thus become part of the operational centre of Enpr-EMA. SwissPedNet was represented in person at the annual meeting in Amsterdam in November 2025 and leveraged the opportunity to share experience with organizations involved in pediatric clinical research in Europe.

In Switzerland, SwissPedNet was actively strengthening relationships within and outside of SwissPedNet. Two SwissPedNet field trips were offered to the network, hosted by Aarau and Fribourg. In Aarau in May, the focus was on the learnings from the SNSF IICT study [KIDS-STEP](#) and

the transfer of knowledge to the new [MYTHIC](#) study. In September, the SwissPedNet staff learned more about complementary medicine and its research in pediatrics, an [area of specific expertise](#) of the pediatric department at the cantonal hospital in Fribourg.

Both events have been well visited, received excellent feedback and offered the opportunity to meet and strengthen relationships among professionals across Switzerland.

The collaboration with the Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation is continued, independent of the organization of the Coordination Office. In 2025, the contributions of pediatric experts to the SCTO platforms' work have been planned collaboratively with the SCTO scientific affairs team and the platform coordinators and will be implemented in 2026. Further, the University Children's Hospital Basel (UKBB) received SwissPedNet funds to contribute insights from pediatric clinical practice to an ongoing Research on Research project on General Consent implementation in Switzerland, led by the SCTO. Continuous collaboration is lived on individual project level by the SCTO Clinical Research Centres and the local SwissPedNet hubs.

A major milestone to improve collaboration across organizations in Switzerland was the decision of the SwissPedNet General Assembly to introduce an additional membership category for associate members, and in the same meeting, welcome ten associate members to the network. SwissPedNet is thrilled to be able to deepen its collaboration across organizations in Switzerland and increase the efforts to integrate and share available expertise in advancing pediatric clinical research in Switzerland.

The following institutions and organizations are now associate members of SwissPedNet:

- [Swiss Paediatric Oncology Group](#)
- [Swiss Paediatric Surveillance Unit](#)
- [Kinderärzte Schweiz](#)
- [Neonatologie Universitäts Spital Zürich](#)
- [pädiatrie schweiz](#)
- [Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute](#)
- [MYTHIC](#)
- [Zentrum für Kinder – und Jugendmedizin Kantonsspital Winterthur](#)
- [Spitalzentrum Biel, Klinik Wildermeth](#)
- [Pédiatrie, Réseau Hospitalier Neuchâtelois](#)

3. Enhance further use of pediatric clinical research data

In the past year, the project team of [SwissPedHealth](#) worked intensively on advancing the nested and lighthouse projects within the National Data Stream (NDS) while simultaneously planning the maintenance and continuation of the Data Stream beyond the termination of SPHN funding. Huge progress has been made in 2025 on several levels:

All data providers (five University Hospitals and two Cantonal Hospitals) have managed to create a functioning infrastructure to deliver data following SPHN's "FAIR" semantic and technical framework to the central data space at BioMedIT. Except for one hospital, this data has been shareable to the SwissPedHealth NDS registry database regardless of general consent status. For use in research projects, it will be easy to filter data based on consent status. At project level, at least partial datasets are available for all projects, despite late 1st transfers which limited the time to clean and

curate the data on the project side. For all nested projects, pre-specified analyses have been run on the datasets.

In 2025, automated data quality reporting pipelines were set-up and are now running in the NDS registry tenant. In a quality improvement project focusing on antibiotic usage and stewardship (nested project 4) a process for anonymization of data has been implemented. The expertise and insights gained from this achievement will be valuable for future healthcare quality improvement projects.

The capability to conduct a complex prospective clinical study within the NDS was proven by recruitment of already 100 patients (expected n = 120 by March 2026) in the [lighthouse project \(MOMIC\)](#) of SwissPedHealth. This project developed a multiomics workflow to improve diagnosis of rare disease in critically ill children / children with life-threatening conditions. After phase 2, working with retrospective data, in 2025 phase 3 could be started, prospectively collecting biosamples for analysis, processing and digitalization.

Overall, the pace for development with regards to further use of pediatric clinical research data has been kept high in 2025. SwissPedNet is closely collaborating with SwissPedHealth and supporting its aims and structures to increase the benefits drawn from pre-existing clinical data.

4. Implement patient-public involvement (PPI) in pediatric clinical research

In many pediatric research projects in Switzerland methods to include patient or parent insights are applied. However, for most pediatric hospitals/departments, structures to systematically consider PPI for clinical research and a culture to acknowledge the importance of the children's voice is not yet where we would like it to be. SwissPedNet, as the national network uniting hospitals and organizations dedicated to pediatric clinical research, is thus devoted to coordinate the developments with regards to PPI in pediatrics in Switzerland. As a member of the [European Young Patient Advisory Group network \(eYPAGnet\)](#) SwissPedNet can rely on international experience for the upcoming developments.

As a first step in 2025, professionals active or interested in pediatric PPI in clinical research have been clustered into the "SwissPedNet PPI Network" to facilitate communication and transparency on individual expertise and activities as well as sharing opportunities for training, international exchange and events. The newly established collaborative working space through MS Teams further supports the coordination. The space offered and maintained by SwissPedNet enables professionals in pediatric PPI to access and contribute to documents and materials independent of their affiliation and allows quick and comprehensive exchange of experience.

5. Supporting and educating pediatric clinician researchers

With the NextGen Research Day and the two sessions at the annual congress of pädiatrie schweiz, SwissPedNet offers a unique opportunity for clinical researchers in pediatrics to hone their research skills, improve their specific methodological knowledge and to exchange and network with fellow clinical researchers in pediatrics. The NextGen Research Day, as a full day interactive teaching event, is thus not limited to physicians but also welcomes child psychologists, pediatric nurses or any other professional involved in clinical pediatric research. The quality of the teaching event also convinces pädiatrie schweiz, the teaching event is accredited with 5 continuing education credit points.

The NextGen Research Day, held on 21 May 2025 in Bern, offered some highlights. In-line with the aim of increasing the awareness and use of PPI in pediatric research, two workshops have been dedicated to the interface with patients/parents and supported by patient representatives from [Frühchen & Neokinder Schweiz](#). One workshop focused on communication with parents about clinical research – an important aspect to support successful recruitment, motivated trial participation and confidence of physicians. The second workshop, supported by first-hand experience of parents affected by clinical research, educated the participants how to beneficially include PPI in their research project.

In the afternoon, some of the participants dared to face the challenge of a scientific escape room. We are confident that the participants not only had a lot of fun but were also made aware of the context and regulatory basis of clinical trial decision making and will know what documents to consult to successfully manage potential obstacles in future projects.

We warmly thank our industry sponsors AbbVie and Eli Lilly for their financial support for the NextGen Research Day.

While the young researchers were mostly amongst themselves at the NextGen Research Day, SwissPedNet offered an opportunity for young researchers to present their work to the national pediatric community at the annual pädiatrie schweiz congress. For the 12th time, the **SwissPedNet NextGen Sessions** were held on 22nd and 23rd of May 2025.

We congratulate the winners sharing the prize of the **SwissPedNet NextGen Instagram** session:

Arianna Pfiffer, Children's University Hospital Zürich

for her research project " Enhancing Precision in Pediatric Brain Tumor MRI: Automated Segmentation Using Deep Learning "

and

Jakica Cavar, Divison of Pediatric Hematology/ Ongology, Inselspital Bern

for her research project " Survey on Cancer Predisposition Identification & Observation Practice in Europe (SCOPE)? "

The Instagram Session followed the format of the famous social media website to transmit content as an image. The presenters prepared a graphical abstract to show the main messages of the project.

We congratulate the winner of the **SwissPedNet NextGen Podcast** session:

Franco Romero, Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern

For his research project: " Can routine electronic healthcare records be used to collect and enhance data collection for cohort studies? The SPHN-SPAC demonstrator project. "

The Research Podcast Session followed the format of legendary interviews that were broadcast on BBC for decades: One moderator sits on stage with each presenter and discusses the project in an interview and dialogue format.

The pädiatrie schweiz | pédiatrie suisse kindly offered the award of CHF 3000.- for each session.

General Assembly 2025

The 13th SwissPedNet General Assembly has been held on December 5, 2025 in Bern.

Federal funding period 2025 to 2028

The standard amount for government funding was confirmed for our ordinary members. Further, some of the remaining budget dedicated to activities in pediatric PPI, further use of pediatric clinical data and contributions to SCTO projects has been transferred to 2026. Due to the many organizational developments not all projects could be started in 2025 as initially planned.

Re-election of president and the board

Matthias Baumgartner as president as well as Julia Bielicki as vice-president ended the first term in their respective roles. Both were re-elected unanimously. We are happy to count on their expertise and involvement for another three years!

Appointing the Auditors

For 2026, Philipp Agyeman, Bern offered to again audit the books of SwissPedNet. He will be joined by Arnaud l'Huillier, Geneva.

Acknowledgment

Our thanks go again to the SCTO and their continuous support for the pediatric research infrastructure and their support in collaboration with European projects.

pädiatrie schweiz | pédiatrie suisse granted the SwissPedNet NextGen award. AbbVie and Eli Lilly supported the NextGen Research Day. All speakers and workshop leaders offered their time for free and helped to make the NextGen Research Day as successful as it was! All are most appreciated!

We include in our thanks the SwissPedNet board members who support the network in an honorary capacity with their expertise and time in a highly involved and reliable manner.

Outlook and next steps

We are keen to implement some of the projects in 2026 that have been waiting in our pipeline for a moment. The main focus lies on a refined strategy for national pediatric PPI development, including not only parents but also children, in alignment with other national developments such as the work within [the National Coordination Platform Clinical Research \(CPCR\)](#).

Further, the reporting data from 2025 will give us a first indication of the direction of the development in our clinical trial support activities. We are interested to see the quantification of the growth of SwissPedNet and to identify areas for further development.

Last but not least, following the commitment of our new associate members, the year 2026 will serve as an opportunity to get to know each other better, further increase transparency on activities and expertise and identify areas of collaboration.

Please visit our website: www.swisspednet.ch. Here you will find more information about the activities of our network.

Annual Financial Statement

The SwissPedNet association year and the financial year proceed from 01 October to 30 September. Therefore, the information given relates to the accounts 1.10.2024 to 30.9.2025 and the balance sheet as per 30.9.2025.

The association assets close with a loss of CHF 3'635.20 mainly due to reduced pharmaceutical sponsoring of the NextGen Research Day (CHF 1'500 vs. CHF 7'000 in 2024).

Expenses 2025

CHF

NextGen Research Day, SwissPedNet NextGen Sessions	11995.60
SwissPedNet Events (General Assembly, Field Trips, Board Meetings)	5817.82
Personal expense	525.60
Insurance	1837.50
Operating expense, including external consulting	5788.50
Total Expenses	25'965.00

Income 2025

CHF

Membership Fees	12'000
Sponsoring and participant fees NextGen Research Day	3'980
Income related to service provision	6'359.80
Total Income	22'339.80

Status of association assets on 30 September 2025 (CHF)	88'338.64
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People of SwissPedNet Board and Coordination Office 2025

Members of the Board

President	Prof. Matthias Baumgartner
Vice-president	Prof. Dr Julia Bielicki
Assessors	PD Dr. Michael Büttcher
	PD Dr. Myrona Goutaki
	Prof. François Angoulvant
	PD Dr. Barbara Goeggel Simonetti

SwissPedNet Coordination Office

Executive Manager	MSc Anna Naef
Assistant	MSc Gia Thu Ly