

Cancer Core Europe: a consortium to address the cancer care – cancer research continuum challenge

Gustave Roussy Cancer Campus Grand Paris (Villejuif – France), Cambridge Cancer Centre (Cambridge, United Kingdom), Karolinska Institutet – KI (Stockholm, Sweden), Netherlands Cancer Institute – NKI (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), Vall d’Hebron Institute of Oncology – VHIO (Barcelona, Spain) and the German Cancer Research Center – DKFZ and its National Center for Tumor Diseases – NCT (Heidelberg, Germany) announce the creation of Cancer Core Europe: a consortium to address the cancer care – cancer research continuum challenge.

The optimal treatment of cancer remains one of the major medical challenges globally due to the high diversity in the spectrum of mutations in individual cancer patients. To tackle this issue, cancer programmes must be better integrated and performed at a large scale. European cancer research is therefore in need of a transformative initiative whereby a consortium of comprehensive cancer centers of excellence will work collectively in order to carry out joint translational and clinical research in cancer treatment and care.

To deliver on this objective, Gustave Roussy Cancer Campus Grand Paris (Villejuif – France), Cambridge Cancer Centre (Cambridge, United Kingdom), Karolinska Institutet – KI (Stockholm, Sweden), Netherlands Cancer Institute – NKI (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), Vall d’Hebron Institute of Oncology – VHIO (Barcelona, Spain) and the German Cancer Research Center – DKFZ and its National Center for Tumor Diseases – NCT (Heidelberg, Germany) have jointly decided to create **Cancer Core Europe**.

As a working consortium, Cancer Core Europe will be a great translational platform to make the bridge "bench-to-bedside and bedside-to-bench" also for conducting next-generation clinical trials focused on proof-of-concept, companion predictive and resistance monitoring biomarkers.

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The creation of a virtual single “e-hospital”

The prerequisites for joint translational and clinical research programs are very demanding. These require a powerful translational platform that integrates all patient files using a common software platform that federates the databases from each of the centers; inter-compatible clinical molecular profiling laboratories with a robust underlying computational biology pipeline; standardized functional and molecular imaging; commonly agreed SOPs for liquid and tissue biopsy procurement, storage and processing, for molecular diagnostics, “omics”, functional genetics, immune-monitoring; a culture of data collection and storage that facilitates complete longitudinal data sets.

A critical mass of activity for the successful integration of all cancer care information, clinical research and outcome research

Given the excellent track records of the six participants in these areas, Cancer Core Europe will be able to support the full spectrum of research required to address the cancer research – cancer care continuum. Cancer Core Europe also constitutes a unique environment for the training of up-and-coming talents in innovative translational and clinical oncology.

Yearly within the Cancer Core Europe consortium around 60.000 newly diagnosed cancer patients are seen, 300.000 cancer treatments are delivered and about 1.000.000 outpatient visits are performed. More than 1.500 clinical trials are being conducted at these six cancer centers annually. Together with the strengths in basic and translational cancer research, this represents a unique critical mass of activity that once successfully harmonized as one operational clinical research structure will represent and harness a major force in European cancer research.

The consortium agreement of Cancer Core Europe was signed in July 2014, in Paris, by Alexander Eggermont (Gustave Roussy), Carlos Caldas (Cambridge Cancer Centre), Ulrik Ringborg (Karolinska Institutet), René Medema (Netherlands Cancer Institute), Josep Tabernero (Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology), Otmar Wiestler (DKFZ-NCT).

To learn more about the six institutions:

- . Gustave Roussy: www.gustaveroussy.fr
- . Cambridge Cancer Centre: www.cambridgecancercentre.org.uk
- . Karolinska Institutet: www.ki.se
- . Netherlands Cancer Institute: www.nki.nl
- . Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology: www.vhebron.net
- . DKFZ-NCT: www.dkfz.de

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 3,000 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. The staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg, where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. In the German Consortium for Translational Cancer Research (DKTK), one of six German Centers for Health Research, DKFZ maintains translational centers at seven university partnering sites. Combining excellent university hospitals with high-profile research at a Helmholtz Center is an important contribution to improving the chances of cancer patients. DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers, with ninety percent of its funding coming from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

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