

Press release

LEUKOCARE participates in European consortium to validate blood-based biomarkers for cancer

LEUKOCARE is part of the newly formed consortium CANCER-ID to support basic research as well as monitoring and treatment of cancer patients. Based on previous work from an EU FP7 grant program and on its Stabilizing and Protecting Solutions (SPS[®]) technology platform, LEUKOCARE continues its efforts to further develop a medical device (CTCTrap) for the capturing of a high number of circulating tumour cells in different types of cancer patients.

Munich, Germany, 24 April 2015

CANCER-ID is a newly formed European consortium funded by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) with currently 33 partners from 13 countries aiming at the establishment of standard protocols for and clinical validation of blood-based biomarkers. It brings together experts from academic and clinical research, innovative Small-to-Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) like LEUKOCARE, diagnostics companies and the pharmaceutical industry thus providing a unique setting for establishing clinical utility of “liquid biopsies”.

“The time has come to join forces and determine the best path forward to guide therapy of cancer patients. It is great that we are now in a position to extend and expand our work from our EU FP7 program CTCTrap and determine utility of the technologies developed in this project for patients with Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer. The collaboration between small and large enterprises with a stake in this field, academic leaders and clinical investigators certainly sets the stage to truly make headway in this field”, commented Prof. Leon Terstappen from the University of Twente. The contributions to the project of currently 8.2 million EUR by the industrial partners are complemented by funding from the IMI Joint Undertaking resulting in a total budget of EUR 14.5 million.

Blood-based biomarkers such as circulating tumor cells (CTCs), circulating free tumor DNA (cfDNA) and microRNAs (miRNAs) are potential indicators for the tumor burden of patients living with cancer. Derivation of these markers from blood may offer an additional invaluable tool for modern cancer therapy: apart from being of high importance when biopsies of the tumor are not accessible, blood-based tests may allow a close follow-up of disease markers offering a means to monitor the efficacy of treatment and potentially improve the choice of treatment options.

The academic leads of the CANCER-ID consortium are Prof. Klaus Pantel, Head of the Department of Tumor Biology at the University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf, Germany, and Prof. Leon Terstappen, Head of the Department of Medical Cell Biophysics at the University of Twente, The Netherlands. Both are leaders in the field and have an impressive track record in both basic research and applied science including device development. The EFPIA lead companies of the CANCER-ID consortium are Bayer HealthCare and Silicon Biosystems, A Menarini Group Company.

For more information on CANCER-ID visit: <http://www.cancer-id.eu>

About the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI)

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is working to improve health by speeding up the development of, and patient access to, innovative medicines, particularly in areas where there is an unmet medical or social need. It does this by facilitating collaboration between the key players involved in healthcare research, including universities, the pharmaceutical and other industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), patient organizations and medicines regulators.

IMI is a partnership between the European Union and the European pharmaceutical industry, represented by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). Through the IMI 2 programme, IMI has a budget of €3.3 billion for the period 2014-2024. Half of this comes from the EU's research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. The other half comes from large companies, mostly from the pharmaceutical sector; these do not receive any EU funding, but contribute to the projects 'in kind', for example by donating their researchers' time or providing access to research facilities or resources.

The research leading to these results has received support from the Innovative Medicines Initiative Joint Undertaking under grant agreement n° [115749], resources of which are composed of financial contribution from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) and EFPIA companies' in kind contribution.

More info: www.imi.europa.eu

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About LEUKOCARE

LEUKOCARE is a leading provider of technologies for stabilisation and protection of proteins to extend shelf life and to enable terminal sterilization. With LEUKOCARE technologies, biopharmaceutical products and vaccines can be significantly improved in respect to storage stability and quality. Moreover, a wide variety of surfaces can be functionalised by biologically active substrates, including implant surfaces, wound dressings, stents, catheters and others. LEUKOCARE provides proprietary and patented formulation technologies for stabilization and protection of biologics to partners in the fields of biopharmaceuticals, vaccines and combination devices. Beyond that, LEUKOCARE offers related development services in the course of the technology implementation process.

LEUKOCARE leverages its comprehensive expertise in product-focused industrial partnerships. LEUKOCARE's technologies are currently employed in more than 15 collaborative development projects with industrial partners. LEUKOCARE was founded in 2003 and is headquartered in Martinsried near Munich, Germany.

For further information, please visit: www.LEUKOCARE.com.

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