

East Lancashire Prostate Cancer Support Group Newsletter



Volume 10 Issue4

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Helping PCUK A Big Thank You!

What's Inside

A Big Thank You P1

Predicting Success P2 P3 P4

A Look Inside the Lab P5 P6 P7 P8

A Message From The Team P9

Research Request P10

Zoom Meeting P11

From: riley.d7

Sent: 08 April 2021 20:29

To: marshall stuart; Peter Chadwick; Alan Pilkington; hazelgoulding@yahoo.co.uk; Leon Wright

Subject: Fwd: Thank you for your donation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: theteam@virginmoneygiving.com

Date: 8 April 2021 at 19:32:16 BST

To: riley.d7@sky.com

Subject: Thank you for your donation

A big thank you

Your £150.00 donation will make a difference to Prostate Cancer UK, Macmillan Cancer Support and we know your support will mean a lot to Anthony.

April 2021



Thank you so much for your support. It really motivates me to keep going and it will help save men's lives.

Anthony

Prostate Cancer UK:

Thank you so much for supporting Prostate Cancer UK. Prostate cancer is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK, killing one man

Predicting success in therapy with individualized cancer models

March 8, 2021

Date:

University of Bern

Source:

Summary:

Scientists have established organoid culture models from prostate tumor biopsies. These are small clusters of cells which can be used to test the efficacy of various drugs. In this way, it is possible to test which treatment will most likely benefit individual patients.

Share:

FULL STORY

In the EU alone, 78,800 men died of prostate cancer last year. While tumors discovered at an early stage can often be completely removed by surgery and radiation therapy, the prospects of successful treatment are reduced if the cancer has further metastasized. At present, physicians cannot predict drug response or therapy resistance in patients.

Three-dimensional structures

The team led by PD Dr. Marianna Kruthof-de Julio at the Urology Research Laboratory at the Department for BioMedical Research (DBMR) of the University of Bern and Inselspital Bern, has developed a new strategy for the generation of prostate cancer organoids that can contribute to assess therapy response, their work is published in the latest issue of *Nature Communications*. Drs Sofia Karkampouna and Federico La Manna, the two lead co-authors of the paper, spent over one and a half year in optimizing and efficient protocol for the generation of the patient derived organoids and their detailed characterization.

Moreover, in collaboration with the NEXUS Personalized Health Technologies, they have meticulously developed a medium-throughput screen for drug testing.

The researchers led by PD Dr. Kruithof-de Julio have demonstrated that patient-derived organoids retain relevant characteristics of the prostate carcinoma from which they have been originated: not only are they characterized by the same genetic mutations, but they also exhibit similar gene activity patterns.

Paving the way for personalized medicine

PD Dr. Kruithof-de Julio and her collaborators first generated a novel early stage, patient derived xenograft that is treatment naïve, then tested 74 different drugs on organoids from this and other experimental tumor models – identifying 13 compounds that reduced prostate cancer cell viability.

The researchers then tested the efficacy of these compounds on organoids from five prostate cancer patients – two with early-stage tumors and three with advanced metastatic tumors. Interestingly, among the hits ponatinib, so far approved for the treatment of leukemia, proved to be particularly effective in reduction of organoid viability and tumor growth *in vivo*.

However, for PD Dr. Kruithof-de Julio, the significance of these results lies not only in the drug repurposing but more importantly in promoting an approach that the medical community can undertake. "Our results pave the way for personalized medicine. In our study we only analyzed data from five patients retrospectively," says Kruithof-de Julio. "But we clearly showed that the method would be in principle feasible. Growing the organoids and drug testing can be accomplished in two weeks, a time frame that is compatible with clinical decision making. In collaboration with the Urology Department of the Inselspital, led by Prof Thalmann, we have now already been able to prove this in several cases."

"In my clinical activity, I am regularly confronted by tumors that do not respond to therapy or for which we do not know which therapy to use," says Thalmann. "This is a further step in the direction of individualized medicine, where we might be able to tailor the treatment to the tumor

during the course of the disease and better understand its biology." With this approach, the researchers hope to treat patients more efficiently with less side effects and diminished costs.

Story Source:

Materials provided by [University of Bern](#). Note: Content may be edited for style and length.

Journal Reference:

1. Sofia Karkampouna, Federico La Manna, Andrej Benjak, Mirjam Kiener, Marta De Menna, Eugenio Zoni, Joël Grosjean, Irena Kilma, Andrea Garofoli, Marco Bolle, Arianna Vallerga, Jean-Philippe Theurillat, Maria R. De Filippo, Vera Ganitsch, David Keller, Tijmen H. Booij, Christian U. Stimimann, Kenneth Eng, Andrea Sboner, Charlotte K. Y. Ng, Salvatore Piscuoglio, Peter C. Gray, Martin Spahn, Mark A. Rubin, George N. Thalmann, Marianna Kruthof-de Julio. **Patient-derived xenografts and organoids model therapy response in prostate cancer.** *Nature Communications*, 2021; 12 (1) DOI: [10.1038/s41467-021-21300-6](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-21300-6)

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Dr. Susan Heavey is demystifying cancer research by giving us a look inside the lab.

And this week you can join her for a virtual cuppa.



19 Apr 2021

In - [Research](#)

[Comments \(5\)](#)

Your continued support allows us to find the brightest scientists like Dr. Susan Heavey throughout their careers. We invest long-term in their valuable years of experience with prostate cancer research to have the greatest impact for men.

Now Dr. Heavey and her colleagues are sharing their experience beyond the lab to educate and inspire the public.

Dr. Heavey joined us as a recipient of our Travelling Fellowship Award, which provides an opportunity for outstanding early-career researchers to develop in the best research environments in the UK and overseas. Dr. Heavey's work on 3D modelling and testing treatments on real human prostates within the lab has the potential for life-changing results for men with prostate cancer. Alongside her busy research career, she's also educating the public about the reality of cancer research, demystifying the science and giving us a look inside the lab.

Ahead of her appearance at our **Funding the Future: Virtual Cuppa**, we caught up with Dr Heavey to talk about what motivates her to beat prostate cancer, and her passion for communicating complex science to the public.

How have you found your experience of the Travelling Prize Fellowship?

It's been an incredible opportunity to develop as an independent researcher. It allowed me to travel to the USA and Sweden to learn cutting-edge techniques, and implement them in my newly established research group in the Centre for 3D Models of Health and Disease at University College London (UCL). I'm forever grateful to all you fantastic supporters – so thank you to everyone reading!

What are you working on right now?

I'm using donated specimens of human prostate tumours to test new drugs and better understand prostate cancer itself. We're using some fun new techniques like 'spatial transcriptomics' (combining information about the genes with information about their location) which gives researchers huge amounts of molecular data to play with. This helps us improve our understanding of how these new drugs will impact prostate tumours.

Tell us more about the educational videos about cancer research you're making with your friend Dr. Hayley Pya.

I've been fortunate enough to meet hundreds of prostate cancer patients through my research projects, mostly when inviting them to take part in our work and donate specimens to us. Many have excellent questions about our research, having read about it online or in the news. But without fail, they'll always ask what is research 'really' like – do we work in futuristic, spotless, CSI-style labs using augmented reality goggles and lasers? Or beautiful rusty old wooden labs with specimens in jars on display in antique cabinets?

The truth involves elements of both, but mostly is a bit more mundane. I like to actually show them what real labs look like and what real researchers work on. That was the key motivator to start the 'Cancer Research Demystified' (CRD) YouTube channel with Dr. Hayley Pye a few years ago. We're still going strong, and most of our work for CRD is directly answering questions we've been asked by patients.

I've always been driven to help cancer patients in particular, as we have a lot of cancer in my own family. Unfortunately, my dad died recently of cancer, and he remains a big motivator in my life and career.

- Dr. Susan Heavey

Cancer Research Demystified has gone from strength to strength, with thousands of engagements across YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, Facebook, Tumblr, LinkedIn and more. We now have around 100,000 people interact with us each month across our various online channels, which is surreal. It's been particularly fulfilling to also attend some events offline in the 'real world' with support groups, schools and hospitals, meeting patients face-to-face. We've also won some awards for our work from UCL and Prostate Cancer UK, which we were delighted about – but the crowning achievement for us is when patients send us messages with really astute research questions that they formed after watching one of our videos. That makes it worth all the hard work!

Watch Dr. Heavey and Dr. Pye explain how they use 3D printed prostate moulds in the lab...

How and WHY are we putting human prostates in 3D printers...



Copy this link into your web browser to watch the video https://youtu.be/_50MDBqwkow

What's made you so passionate about prostate cancer research?

It's about both scientific discovery and personal motivation. I've always been driven to help cancer patients in particular, as we have a lot of cancer in my own family. Unfortunately, my dad died recently of cancer, and he remains a big motivator in my life and career.

Academia is a tough job, and lab work can be a bit unforgiving – sometimes you spend weeks or months on something that fails at the last step, and you need to start all over again. If you didn't have the patients and their families in your mind and heart at a time like that, it would be much harder to get straight back to the bench.

Join Dr. Heavey this Thursday at Funding the Future: Virtual Coppa

Learn more about her exciting work testing new prostate cancer drugs and targeting a specific gene involved in prostate cancer development. You'll also learn about the impact of leaving a gift in your Will and how it has sustained projects like Dr. Heavey's throughout the pandemic. Dr. Heavey will be joined by a Specialist Nurse from our award-winning support service to answer any questions you might have. Register to attend on 22 April at 11am, [here](#).

Your regular gifts allow us to fund the brightest and best minds to build a future where nobody has to worry about prostate cancer.

A Message from the East Lancs. Prostate Cancer Support Group

This circular is to all the people who have visited our Support Group Meetings and supported us over the last 10 years, we hope you have all managed to have kept safe and well during this awful and turbulent time.

Sadly, due to the Covid situation our Support Group meetings were curtailed, our last meeting was held back in March 2020, - 30 of you attended the Mackenzie Centre including 2 guest speakers.

The Mackenzie Centre has been booked for us continually for when we are able to re-commence our meetings thanks to our resident nurse Debbie Hesketh.

The 5th Nov 2020 meeting would have been our groups 10th anniversary meeting, since the founding of the Support Group! and we were really looking forward to a special celebratory event.

We are now looking forward to commencing meetings as soon as we are able so we can continue offering help and advice to people who are affected by Prostate Cancer.'

We welcome all new and existing people along with their partners who have been diagnosed or affected with Prostate Cancer

Stuart Marshall (Sec.)

We will be very grateful if you could help us.

As you can appreciate, over the last 10 years we have supported many people and unfortunately our long register of members is very outdated We therefore ask you if you will be good enough to **email me at riley.d7@sky.com** if you would like to remain on our group records.

We have recently purchased a 'Zoom' package for our group which will allow us to continue to hold a regular meeting, albeit online on our designated **FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH at 2PM**. We hope this will only be for a short period of time until we can resume 'Face to Face' meetings back at The Mackenzie suite Burnley General Hospital.

To obtain ZOOM all you need to do is type 'Zoom' in to your search engine and download the free App. to your computer or smart phone. To join a meeting you only require a meeting 'ID number' and a 'Passcode' both of which will be emailed to you by Leon our 'IT specialist' prior to the event. We would all like to see you on Thursday 6th May at 2pm.

Please note, we have a guest speaker booked for the meeting so your support will be gratefully appreciated.

Until then, keep safe. **Dave Riley (Chairman).**

From: Mario Lopez Torres <mario.lopez@evolve-fieldwork.com>
Date: 13 April 2021 at 10:57:20 BST
To: riley.d7@sky.com
Subject: Prostate Cancer Research

Hello Dave,

My name is Mario and I work with Evolve Fieldwork, we are currently conducting a research with patients affected by prostate cancer. I am reaching out to you to see if I could get some help from you and your support group with this research.

Please find below the information regarding the research, if any member wants to sign up for this one or future research, they will be always welcome to share with us their experiences and raise awareness.

Here below is the invite you can forward.

Evolve Fieldwork LTD. is working with Evidera, a scientific research company, to learn about patient preferences in treatments for metastatic castration resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC).

If you are interested and eligible to take part, you would participate in a 60-minute interview so we can better understand patients' experiences with mCRPC and its treatments. Interviews will be conducted via telephone/online and would involve completing a short online survey. The study does not involve taking any treatments; we are only interested in opinions.

As compensation for your time, you would receive an incentive of £80 for taking part in the interview.

If you are interested in more information about this study, do not hesitate to contact me or complete the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/r/fUmNUR5JtD>





Contact Information

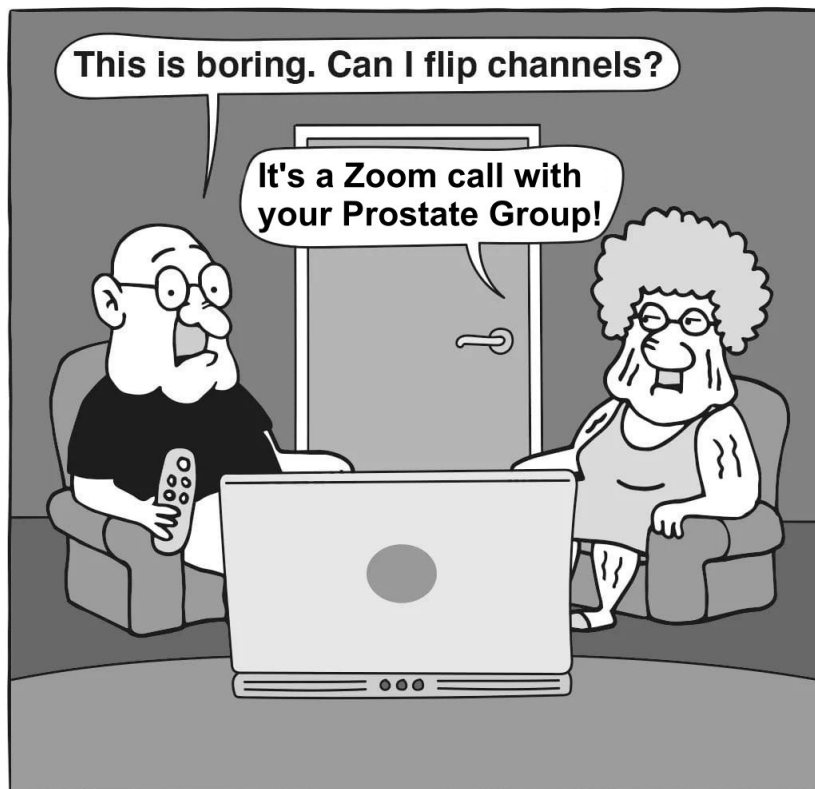
Tel: 07548 033930
E Mail elpcsginfo@virginmedia.com

From Left to Right Hazel Goulding (Treasurer) Leon D Wright (IT Admin) Stuart Marshall (Secretary) Steve Laird (Vice Chairman) Dave Riley (Chairman)

We are a group of local people who know about prostate cancer. We are a friendly organisation dedicated to offering support to men who have had or who are experiencing the effects of this potentially life threatening disease.

The East Lanc's Prostate Cancer Support Group offers a place for free exchange of information and help for local men and their supporters (family and friends) who may be affected by this increasingly common form of male cancer.

At each meeting we strive to be a happy, supportive and upbeat group of people; encouraging open discussion on what can be a very difficult and perhaps for some an embarrassing subject. We have lively, informative, interactive, sharing and above all supportive meetings.



DAN BACKLAND FOR GRUMPY OLD GITS | @LITTLE CHURCH MOUSE LTD MMXXI

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