



Ontario Institute for Cancer Research announces \$12.6 million to support high impact clinical trials in Ontario

Kingston, Ontario – August 22, 2011. Dr. Tom Hudson, President and Scientific Director of the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR), today announced \$12.6 million in funding over four years for OICR's High Impact Clinical Trials (HICT) Program.

The HICT Program, led by Dr. Janet Dancey, will introduce more translational research into clinical trials in Ontario, ensuring the best research discoveries are developed into new approaches for treating cancer patients. The Program has been designed to evaluate innovative technologies that will lead to more personalized medicine, offering more targeted treatment potentially associated with greater efficacy and less toxicity.

"The McGuinty government understands that to overcome cancer we need to turn new ideas into treatments," said Glen Murray, Minister of Research and Innovation. "The High Impact Clinical Trials Program will help save lives, while reaffirming Ontario's leadership at moving discoveries from lab bench to bedside."

"The McGuinty government is a proud supporter of the High Impact Clinical Trials Program through the funding we provide to OICR," said John Gerretsen, MPP for Kingston and The Islands. "The world-class research taking place here at Queen's University and across Ontario will bring new therapies and new hope to cancer patients and their families."

"OICR created the High Impact Clinical Trials Program in collaboration with Cancer Care Ontario to enhance the environment for clinical trials in Ontario, attract new studies to the province and help ensure the best cancer research in the province is made available to patients as efficiently and rapidly as possible," said Dr. Hudson. "We are pleased to support the HICT Program in its mission to safely and effectively deliver more personalized medicine to patients."

Two major projects within the High Impact Clinical Trials Program were also announced today, both of which aim to better integrate recent advances in genomics research into regular clinical practice.

The Rare Tumour Clinical Trials Initiative is a partnership between OICR, Pfizer Canada, and the NCIC Clinical Trials Group (NCIC CTG), an academic clinical trials cooperative group based at Queen's University. The NCIC CTG, led by its Director, Dr. Ralph Meyer, and the Group's Investigational New Drug Program, led by its Director, Dr. Elizabeth Eisenhauer, will conduct a multi-centre clinical trial evaluating patients with rare tumours. The initiative brings together a multidisciplinary team of clinical investigators, pathologists and genomics researchers to investigate new solutions to treating rare tumours.

"This funding announcement reflects Queen's significant engagement in leading-edge cancer research, partnership initiatives, and multidisciplinary learning. Queen's is a world-class research-intensive university and I am delighted that this investment in the NCIC Clinical Trials Group will help advance understanding of these rare types of cancer," said Dr. Steven Liss, VP (Research) Queen's University.

According to Richard Fajzel, General Manager Oncology Business Unit, Pfizer Canada, "Pfizer is dedicated to the development of cancer medicines targeting various tumour types regardless of their prevalence. We believe this project will help accelerate treatments for rare cancers that will benefit patients who currently have limited options. We appreciate the collaboration and leadership of Ontario's research community to help get this rare tumour project established."

Due to their infrequency rare cancers are still quite poorly understood, severely limiting current treatment options for patients with these cancers. However, recent advances in genomics technology offer hope that better treatment options resulting from this initiative may be achieved within five years. The novel design of this trial can also serve as a template for future trials testing treatment options for other rare cancers.

Dr. Hudson also announced the Genomics Cohort Study for Ontario Clinical Trials, an HICT Program initiative in collaboration with University Health Network's Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), led by Dr. Lillian Siu, Director of the Phase I Program at PMH. OICR's High Impact Clinical Trials Program will collaborate with genomics researchers to develop standard operating procedures that will help to safely and effectively integrate cutting-edge genomic technology with standard clinical practice and improve patient care. This will help to determine how best to match patients to the most optimal treatments using genetic information to maximize anti-tumour efficacy and reduce side effects. There are investigators involved in the study at cancer centres in Ottawa, London, Hamilton and Thunder Bay.

OICR

OICR is an innovative cancer research and development institute dedicated to prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment of cancer. The Institute is an independent, not-for-profit corporation, launched by the Government of Ontario in 2005. The annual budget for OICR, its research partners and collaborators exceeds \$160 million. This supports more than 1,400 investigators, clinician scientists, research staff and trainees located at its headquarters and in research institutes and academia across the Province of Ontario. It has research hubs in Hamilton, Kingston, London, Ottawa, Thunder Bay and Toronto. OICR has key research efforts underway in small molecules, biologics, stem cells, imaging, genomics, informatics and bio-computing, from early stage research to Phase II clinical trials. For more information, please visit the website at www.oicr.on.ca

NCIC Clinical Trials Group

The NCIC Clinical Trials Group (NCIC CTG) is a cancer clinical trials cooperative group that conducts phase I-III trials testing anti-cancer and supportive therapies across Canada and internationally. It is a national research program supported by the Canadian Cancer Society. The NCIC CTG's Central Office is located at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

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