ALK+ International awards its first gift of just under £50k to The Institute of Cancer Research, London

Friday 10 November, 2023

Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Health ::

Scan Me:

- **ALK+ International's gift will help build a tissue bank for ALK+ and other oncogene-driven lung cancers**
- **Tissue bank will help researchers understand resistance to targeted therapies in ALK+, EGFR and other oncogene lung cancers**
- **This gift supports major unmet need for people living with ALK and other oncogene-driven lung cancers**

LONDON, 10 November 2023 – ALK+ International is pleased to announce a gift of just under £50,000 to The Institute of Cancer Research, London, to build a tissue bank of ALK-positive and other oncogene-driven lung cancers, like EGFR. This tissue bank will support Dr Paul Huang at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), working in collaboration with Professor Sanjay Popat from The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, to study treatment resistance in ALK- and EGFR-positive oncogene-addicted lung cancers.

Over the next two to three years, Dr Huang will collect and prepare lung tumour samples from Professor Popat's clinic for a molecular-based study of ALK+ patients. This funding will provide a structured framework within which both tissue and blood specimens can be collected from patients for analyses, allowing us to identify new tests as well as characterise how the tumours become resistant to targeted therapies. The ICR then hope to carry out experiments that underpin and drive the knowledge needed for Dr Huang and Professor Popat to reach their ultimate goal: to deliver an individualised approach to treatment and improve the long-term outcomes in ALK+ lung cancer patients, and beyond, who currently have a poor prognosis.

"ALK+ cancers are cancers of unmet clinical need and it's often only possible for us to research cancers like this because of the incredible fundraising efforts of patient- and family-driven charities. We're so grateful to have the support of ALK+ International to help us start this project into cancers caused by ALK+ mutations. Their support will help us put the infrastructure in place to do research towards developing better and kinder treatment strategies for people with ALK+ cancers," says Dr Paul Huang, Molecular and Systems Oncology Group Leader at The Institute of Cancer Research, London.

ALK+ International co-founders Joanna Jonathan, Jamie Gibbard and Cat Gibbard, and Chair and Trustee Yvonne Diaz and Jan Clark, are thrilled to hit this important milestone in the charity's formation, adding: "Supporting life-changing research is the reason ALK+ International exists. The ICR is one of the world's leading cancer research institutions and we're thrilled to support the work of Professor Popat and Dr Huang. This grant demonstrates that together we can make a difference. We are particularly grateful to everyone who donated and supported our ethos over the past 18 months."

Notes to editors:

Facts about ALK-positive lung cancer

- The ALK (anaplastic lymphoma kinase) mutation was discovered in 2007 and the first ALK targeted therapy treatment was approved in 2011.
- ALK-positive cancer occurs in 5% of all lung cancer patients (72,000 new cases and 64,000 deaths annually globally).
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death worldwide, killing more people every year than colorectal, breast and prostate cancers combined.
- Unfortunately, lung cancer is also one of the poorest funded cancers.
- ALK-positive lung cancer affects young people – about 50% of ALK-positive lung cancer patients are diagnosed at about age 50, many in their 30s.
- Most ALK-positive patients have never smoked or have a light smoking history. There is no known cause for ALK-positive lung cancer.
- Because there are such few symptoms, about 90% of ALK-positive lung cancer patients are diagnosed at stage IV, when the cancer has spread or metastasised to other parts of the body. It is also incurable at stage IV
- ALK-positive mutations also occur in many other cancers such as large cell lymphomas, sarcomas, some breast cancers, bowel and skin melanomas, neuroblastomas, glioblastomas and

more.

About ALK+ International

ALK+ International has a single mission: to increase the life expectancy of ALK+ cancer patients. We do this by fundraising for medical research, providing grants, advocating for patient interests, and collaborating with the wider medical, research, regulatory and patient groups. Learn more about us on: www.alkinternational.org. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Company Contact:

ALK+ International

T. 07990560615
E. advocacy@alkinternational.org
W. https://www.alkinternational.org/

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.alkinternational.pressat.co.uk