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Canary Foundation and the National Cancer Institute Launch New Prostate Cancer Study

Partnership aims to reduce over-treatment of prostate cancer by identifying and validating biomarkers of high-risk prostate cancer

SAN JOSE, CALIF. – MAY 1, 2008 – The Canary Foundation, a nonprofit organization that funds research in early cancer detection, and the National Cancer Institute’s Early Detection Research Network (EDRN), jointly announced today that the two organizations are forming a partnership for the purpose of identifying and validating biomarkers of high-risk prostate cancer within the context of an active surveillance study. Six of the nation’s leading medical research institutions will be participating in this study, which will be ready to enroll patients this summer.

In the United States, prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among men and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among men. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2008, 186,320 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in the United States and 28,660 will die from it. Diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer has its challenges. Many cases of prostate cancer would not have been lethal if left untreated, yet we are currently unable to accurately predict which cases can be safely left untreated. Consequently, over-treatment has become a major problem among men with early prostate cancer and many thousands of men each year undergo excessive treatments such as surgery and are not helped by it. Better methods of detecting prostate cancers early are also needed as many cases of lethal prostate cancer are still missed by current screening strategies.

With a joint goal of reducing over-treatment by identifying aggressive versus passive tumors, the Canary Foundation and the EDRN are combining resources and efforts. The Canary Foundation will provide funding

related to initiating a Prostate Active Surveillance Study (PASS) at six institutions across the country. To expedite the storage and processing of patient information and biological specimens, the EDRN will establish disease specific Common Data Elements, a biospecimen management system and a protocol oversight program. Additionally, the Canary Foundation and EDRN will jointly establish a Biomarker Evaluation Group with the goal of determining those biomarkers that are most promising for evaluation using the biologic materials collected by the Canary Prostate Consortium.

“Both Canary and EDRN believe that early detection technologies will lead the way on finding better cancer treatments for patients,” said Don Listwin, founder and CEO of Canary Foundation. “In this specific study we hope to identify biomarkers that will tell us which prostate cancers need to be aggressively treated, and which do not. Being able to collaborate with EDRN will help us achieve this goal much faster.”

“We are delighted to join forces with the Canary Foundation. With prostate cancer being one of the major focus areas for Canary's cancer programs and with EDRN's multiple ongoing studies related to the early detection of prostate cancer, we see this as a complementary and significant partnership,” said Sudhir Srivastava, Ph.D., MPH, M.S., Chief of the Cancer Biomarkers Research Group at the National Cancer Institute.

The six institutions that will participate in the active surveillance study include Stanford University, the University of California, San Francisco, the University of British Columbia, the University of Washington, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle and the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio. The Canary Prostate team is headed by Dr. Peter Nelson, member of the Human Biology and Clinical Research Divisions of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and professor of Oncology in the Department of Medicine at the University of Washington. He is also a practicing medical oncologist, with a clinical specialty focused on the treatment of prostate cancer.

“We are proud to launch this new study with EDRN and with the participation of leading research institutes.

Through collaboration we can make bigger strides in providing better, more individualized treatment for prostate cancer patients,” said Dr. Nelson.

About Canary Foundation

Named after the “early detection” role canaries once played by alerting coal miners of hazardous fumes, Canary Foundation is the nation’s only nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to the early detection of cancer. While almost \$10 billion is spent annually on cancer research in the United States, the vast majority is allocated to developing new cancer treatments and caring for patients. Surprisingly, little funding is available to researchers investigating new ways to prevent cancer, or to detect it at its earliest, curable stages. Canary Foundation provides funding to researchers who are engaged in developing cancer early detection technologies and protocols. Specifically, Canary Foundation is supporting researchers working toward a standardized family of biomarker signatures for the effective and accurate early detection of all forms of cancer. All administrative and overhead costs are underwritten by the Listwin Family Foundation, allowing 100 percent of contributions to go to early detection research activities. For more information about the Canary Foundation and its programs, please visit www.canaryfoundation.org.

About the NCI Early Detection Research Network

The Early Detection Research Network (EDRN), an initiative of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), brings together dozens of institutions to help accelerate the translation of biomarker information into clinical applications and to evaluate new ways of testing cancer in its earliest stages and for cancer risk.

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