Anticancer Fund

‘Driven by patients, guided by science, powered by donations’

The Anticancer Fund is a private, **non-profit research organisation** driven by patients’ needs, with a focus on building knowledge in the field of cancer treatments. Unlike many cancer foundations bound to local investments the Anticancer Fund works internationally and funds clinical trials in many different countries.

As a result of our research and funding activities, patients will have access to more treatment options, especially to those neglected by commercial providers. Our key objective is that cancer patients live longer, with the best possible quality of life.

We also want to empower cancer patients and give them control over their treatment decisions by bringing them evidence-based information, by answering their medical questions and by guiding them into shared decision-making with their physician.

Achieving our goals not only requires scientific and medical knowledge, but also structural changes in the treatment and drug development system, therefore we engage with decision-makers to deliver sustainable treatment options.

1. More and better treatment options for cancer patients

We focus on accelerating clinical development to ensure more cancer patients get more treatment options faster, using a two-pronged strategy.

a. Doing more with less

Some cancers offer a return on investment for drug developers, but others don’t. We have identified a complementary path that does not rely on the investment strategies of commercial drug developers, but is focusing on non-commercial but nevertheless promising treatment opportunities.

Our own research work has shown that using existing drugs to treat diseases for which they were not initially developed, known as drug repurposing, is an untapped source of potential treatment options.

Moreover, novel treatment schedules need to be considered, such as giving drugs only until necessary instead of continuously, in order to limit drug resistance and disease progression.

Drug repurposing and testing novel treatment schedules are both promising, inexpensive options that must be confirmed in clinical trials.

b. Joining efforts and improving collaboration

Multi-arm platform trials in which multiple treatments are evaluated simultaneously – such as RECOVERY for COVID-19 or STAMPEDE for prostate cancer – have been truly transformative. They have also highlighted the fact that clinical research can come from a strong, multi-stakeholder collaborative effort.

Thanks to the knowledge we have acquired in clinical research and to the network of international collaborators we have built over the past years, our team has a major role to play in promoting and supporting multi-arm platform trials. COVID-19 has shown that this methodology is the best way to obtain solid evidence in the best interest of cancer patients.

2. Individual patients well informed

Patients with cancer have a huge need for accurate and useful information, but this is not always obvious to obtain: doctors don't always have the time to explain the expected benefit and the side effects of a treatment, or patients don't always remember all the details given during a doctor's appointment.

From its start, the Anticancer Fund has been informing patients to help empower them. Over time our efforts have shifted from general to more personalized information, to better support shared decision making.

Through our free service, My Cancer Navigator, we give treatment-related information based on solid science to patients and physicians. We have put together a team of in-house physicians, scientists and external oncologists to perform medical literature searches, discuss the cases, respond to specific questions and inform the patients about the findings in clear and understandable language.

3. Policy at the service of our goals

As an NGO the Anticancer Fund plays a role in sustainable development and beyond our primary focus on cancer research and cancer care, we address governments and decision-makers, both on national and European level.

We engage in public policy discussions and provide information on cancer-related decisions and legislation. By doing so we ensure that the benefit of the patient is the greatest priority for policy makers.

Our major victory so far is that we highlighted the potential of drug repurposing and enhanced public funding from the European Commission for further development of this research field.