Personalized Oncology Screening Results Validated in Method Developed by Seattle Cancer Research Organizations

Seattle, WA. For immediate release: Techniques pioneered for matching cancer patients to personalized cancer treatments have proven successful, and “may significantly affect patient outcomes in the future,” according to a paper published in Cancer Discovery (March 2017).

Dr. Carla Grandori, CEO of Seattle’s SEngine Precision Medicine, is co-author of the recent publication which validates a new cancer drug screening platform currently being developed by SEngine and Cure First, a nonprofit research affiliate also located in Seattle.

Grandori partnered with scientists from Cornell University’s Weill Institute of Precision Medicine and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center to publish "Personalized In Vitro and In Vivo Cancer Models to Guide Precision Medicine.” The study describes the procedure used to screen samples from different tumor types and search for effective drug matches.

SEngine and Cure First scientists combined high-throughput screening of live, patient-derived cancer cells with DNA sequencing of those same samples. Using advanced robotics, the teams tested more than 100 FDA-approved drugs against the cells. They uncovered novel combinations of drugs that were predicted to be effective for each of the cases. Cornell independently confirmed these treatments in mice carrying the same tumors. The identified drugs were all originally approved for use in different cancer types.

“This study marks a major milestone in advancing personalized oncology to the next level,” says Grandori. “It demonstrates to the medical and scientific community that the functional methods developed in our Seattle labs hold great promise for tailoring treatments to a variety of cancer types and increasing odds for successful outcomes.”

SEngine currently awaits federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certification for its cancer drug test called P.A.R.I.S. SEngine’s CLIA certification is expected at the end of the second quarter, and will make SEngine Precision Medicine the only U.S. laboratory certified to assist oncologists in selecting individualized drug therapies based on a functional assay that employs more than 100 drugs and that is capable of screening all major tumor types.

“We are proud of this accomplishment and look forward to receiving our CLIA certification so SEngine can offer oncologists and their patients critical data and options on cancer drug matches,” Grandori said.

This validation of precision medicine and the work being done at SEngine and Cure First will be presented this week at the 2017 American Association for Cancer Research meeting in Washington D.C. by SEngine co-founder Christopher J. Kemp, PhD, and Cornell’s Weill Institute of Precision Medicine’s Dr. Mark Rubin.

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