

September 17, 2012 | By Kim Edwards

## **UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center Launches Bold Campaign to Personalize Cancer Treatment**

**“My Answer to Cancer” will analyze patient tumor DNA to individualize cancer care**

UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center launched a bold plan today aimed at personalizing cancer treatment. The “My Answer to Cancer” team of oncologists, bioinformaticians, pathologists and geneticists pledges to “sequence” or analyze the DNA of large numbers of patients with cancer in order to match each patient to the best available drug for his or her particular tumor. There will be two parallel approaches: a research approach to discover new mutations that cause cancer and a patient-care approach that will use confirmed mutations and other DNA abnormalities to direct patients to clinical studies of agents targeting these abnormalities.

“No two cancers are alike, just as no two people are exactly alike,” said Barbara Parker, MD, medical director of oncology services at UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center. “Recent advances have made it possible to generate a profile of the DNA abnormalities in a tumor. With this information, we can identify profiles that will allow us to tailor cancer treatments to individual patients. This approach will open a new world of cancer treatment with ‘targeted agents’ and could lead to significantly better therapies. Additionally, this research approach will identify new tumor DNA profile abnormalities that could lead to the development of new drugs and new combinations of drugs.”

A project of this scope depends on strong community support. UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center is calling on people living in San Diego County and beyond to help raise an initial \$5 million for this effort. Donors will receive regular updates on medical breakthroughs, the number of patients treated, the number of community members joining in the project, and the amount of money raised, in addition to expert interviews.

“A hundred experts, thousands of patients, a million hopes – that’s our goal,” explained Scott Lippman, MD, director of UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center. “We are taking this very personally and inviting everyone to get involved, from our staff and experts, to our patients and donors.”

**How It Works:**

UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center will use state-of-the-art technology to analyze the tumor DNA of large numbers of cancer patients. Based on these analyses, Moores experts will construct a comprehensive data analysis model of clinical and biological data, which will be used to predict the effects of treatment on tumors with each particular DNA profile. Based on this model’s predictions, patients will be offered available clinical trials that match their individual tumors to the best targeted agents for them. These clinical studies offer hope for improved treatments with fewer side effects. For more information, visit the My Answer to Cancer website at <http://myanswertocancer.ucsd.edu>

**UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center**

UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center is home to nearly 350 medical and radiation oncologists, cancer surgeons, and researchers. It is one of only 41 National Cancer Institute–designated comprehensive cancer centers in the country, a rare honor distinguishing exceptionally high achievement in research, clinical care, education and community outreach and partnerships. For more information, visit [www.cancer.ucsd.edu](http://www.cancer.ucsd.edu)

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