



Contact: Leroy Lowe, President and Cofounder
Email: leroy.lowe@gettingtoknowcancer.org
902-893-5362 bus / 902-890-3070 cell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cancer Scientists from 31 Countries Join Forces to Tackle Cancer's Complexity

HALIFAX, NS, June 27th, 2013 – Getting to Know Cancer, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with a large scientific advisory board has organized more than 350 cancer researchers from prominent research institutions in 31 countries into two separate task forces, in an initiative called “The Halifax Project”. One task force will take what has been learned about cancer’s complexity to design an entirely new approach to therapy, while the other will assess whether or not everyday exposures to mixtures of commonly encountered chemicals have a role to play in cancer causation.

Within this initiative, 12 cross-functional teams of scientists (each focused on a different aspect of cancer biology) will spend the next year reviewing what we now know about cancer’s complexity to design a ground-breaking “broad-spectrum” therapeutic approach that will be aimed at many prioritized targets simultaneously. “We are incredibly happy that we have been able to act as catalyst to get this project underway” said Leroy Lowe, the President of Getting to Know Cancer. “In some respects, this is like crowd-sourcing a solution for cancer. We are drawing small inputs from a great number of researchers to create a truly holistic solution that will be unparalleled in scope. Frankly, we have been a bit overwhelmed by the scale of the response and the enthusiasm of the scientists, who are truly excited by the approach” he added. “For far too long, our mainstream model for treating cancer has been erroneously focused on mostly single intervention strategies. Because for the past several decades it was felt that if the Achilles heel of the disease could be discovered, and that a treatment could be found that would eradicate the one underlying defect responsible for promoting and driving malignant disease. However, we have since learned that cancer is a far more complex disorder with not one, but multiple defects. To overcome these defects – and be genuinely successful – an innovative, multi-pronged and multi-targeted approach to treatment is essential,” said Keith I. Block, M.D., the Medical and Scientific Director of the Block Center for Integrative Cancer Treatment in Skokie, Illinois. “While we have worked quietly over many years on growing this multi-dimensional treatment model, the “Halifax Project” represents the first global initiative that involves the collaboration of a large number of the very best cancer scientists and researchers from around the world. Our team’s objective is to further evolve a comprehensive treatment model with less toxic and more innovative therapies, with the ultimate goal of eradicating cancer,” Block said.

A second task force that is also comprised of 12 teams will take a similar approach and use what we now know about cancer’s complexity to review the risks associated with everyday exposures to mixtures of commonly encountered chemicals. “Although we have learned a lot about the risks associated with certain individual chemicals that are now known to be carcinogens, we know surprisingly little about the cancer risks that might be attributable to the combined effects of the many chemicals that we encounter in our everyday lives.”, said David O. Carpenter, M.D., Director, Institute for Health and the Environment University at Albany, New York. “This project is a very positive step forward because we are still learning about the many factors associated with the cause of the disease”.

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About Getting to Know Cancer

Getting to Know Cancer Cooperative Ltd, is a public-interest, non-profit organization based in Nova Scotia, Canada that was launched in 2011 with a mission is to instigate applied integrative cancer research. The organization’s inception was inspired by a number of cancer-related deaths in the families of the two cofounders, and they have since been focused on finding ways to address a number of systemic barriers that they believe are slowing down the progress of cancer research.

For more information, please visit the organization’s website www.gettingtoknowcancer.org

Contact Information:

Leroy Lowe, President and Cofounder
Getting to Know Cancer
36 Arthur Street, Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada B2N 1X5
Tel: (902) 893-5362 / Cell: 902-890-3070

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