Project editorial piece for public release

Round 2 - Innovation Grant 2016

Name of Grant Recipient / Institution: University of Melbourne

Project Title: Utilising a novel predictor to stratify patients with therapy-resistant pancreatic cancer for treatment with CHK inhibitor drugs to improve responses and outcomes

Principal Investigator: Dr Petranel Ferrao

1. **Summarise the aim of your research**
   - To confirm a novel predictor of response to CHK inhibitor treatment in pancreatic cancer

2. **What have the outcomes been to date?**
   - Pancreatic cancer cell lines that express high levels of the novel predictor are resistant to Gemcitabine, the main chemotherapeutic drug used in treatment of pancreatic cancer patients.
   - The drug resistant pancreatic cell lines with high levels of the novel predictor are responsive to combinatorial treatment with Gemcitabine and CHK inhibitors.

3. **What are the next steps?**
   - Assessment of additional models of pancreatic cancer with high levels of the novel predictor to confirm combination treatment efficacy, and to determine the best dosing and scheduling of drugs. This will generate the essential pre-clinical data required for advancement into clinical evaluation in patients.
   - Advancement of this project could provide an effective treatment option for pancreatic cancers with high levels of the novel predictor, for improved outcomes in patients who are most resistant to some of the current standard-of-care treatments.

4. **What has it meant to receive funding from the Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation?**
   Funding from the Avner Pancreatic Cancer Foundation Innovation grant has enabled:
   - The utilisation of my translational cancer research knowledge, skills and expertise to launch my research in the pancreatic cancer field, and establish collaborative links with experienced pancreatic cancer researchers.
   - Progress to be made on this specific project that was based on my original hypothesis and research plan. The preliminary data generated will be beneficial in obtaining additional larger grants and longer term funding to advance this project and to continue my research work in the pancreatic cancer field.