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MWRI Receives A Glimmer of Hope Foundation Support for Breast Cancer Research, Patient Services



11/8/2019

PITTSBURGH – [Magee-Womens Research Institute](#) (MWRI) has received \$112,500 in funding from [A Glimmer of Hope Foundation](#) (GOH) to further research of metastatic breast cancer (MBC) and to enhance patient support services at [UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital](#).



“Because of the tremendous generosity of all our supporters, we have been able to fund metastatic breast cancer research. This is just the beginning. Our passion is the cure. I am very grateful to Magee and MWRI for their commitment to this important study,” said Diana Napper, founder of GOH Foundation.

The use of solid tumor biopsies — a surgical procedure when tissue is removed from a tumor and examined — to measure patient responses to treatment is mainstay in current breast cancer research. MWRI has found that breast cancers evolve and adapt as a result of therapy treatments and changes in hormones. Better understanding the process of breast cancer evolution is key to combating drug resistance and mortality, but solid tumor biopsies hinder research progress due to the cost and potential clinical complications involved.

MWRI also will analyze liquid biopsies, or blood samples, to better understand how to combat metastatic breast cancer. DNA fragments from tumors are shed into the blood and can be separated from the plasma for genetic sequencing. This may allow real-time monitoring of the size and severity of breast cancer tumors and its response to therapy. Additionally, liquid biopsies are less invasive so they may be taken more frequently than standard solid tumor biopsies.

“We are grateful to A Glimmer of Hope Foundation for supporting our research efforts,” said [Steffi Oesterreich, Ph.D.](#), director, Women’s Cancer Research Center at MWRI and [UPMC Hillman Cancer Center](#). “This funding will help us to measure patient response to treatment and identify changes that may have emerged during tumor evolution.”

About half of the total funding will support the genomic analysis of blood samples previously collected from patients of UPMC Magee. The GOH funds will enable sequencing of the samples and will establish a baseline for future clinical trials.

Additionally, \$25,000 will be used for acupuncture treatments, and \$25,000 will be used for massage therapy to help reduce pain, stress and anxiety for patients at UPMC Magee — a holistic approach that incorporates integrative medicine services with traditional treatments, aimed at healing the mind, body and spirit.

“The generous donation we have received from A Glimmer of Hope will allow us to continue progress on metastatic breast cancer therapies,” said Michael Annichine, chief executive officer of [Magee-Womens Research Institute & Foundation](#). “Through their support, we can continue to improve and personalize breast cancer diagnoses and provide services to ease treatment-related side effects.

PHOTO INFO: (click image for high-res version)

CREDIT: Magee-Womens Research Institute

CAPTION: Magee-Womens Research Institute received a grant from A Glimmer of Hope Foundation to further breast cancer research and enhance patient support services.

*Pictured from left to right: Steffi Oesterreich, Mike Annichine, Troy Treanor, Janice Devine and Diana Napper



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