

# PRESS RELEASE



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## **Immunovia together with Oregon Health and Science University awarded one of the prestigious Pancreatic Cancer Action Network 2017 Research Grants**

LUND, Sweden — On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, it was announced that Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN), the largest patient advocacy group in USA, in partnership with generous donors, awarded Prof. Brett Sheppard and Prof. Rosalie Sears from Oregon Health and Science University one of the Research grants for 2017 of a value of \$ 250.000. This grant is dedicated to investigate the possibility to screen the high risk group of new-onset diabetics (NoD, patients over the age of 50 with new diabetes diagnosis with no prior medical or family history of the disease) for early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. These patients' risk of developing pancreatic cancer is reported to be nearly eight times greater than that of the general population over the 3 years following diagnosis. The project will start July 1, 2017 and will continue until July 30, 2019.

(<https://www.pancan.org/research/grants-program/grants-awarded/by-year/2017-grant-recipients/brett-sheppard-md/>)

Drs. Sheppard and Sears propose screening blood samples from NoD patients who subsequently developed pancreatic cancer. For this retrospective analysis, they will collaborate with Immunovia, Sweden and use the companies IMMray™ PanCan-d test to detect pancreatic cancer at the early stages, when the tumor is resectable by surgery.

PanCAN conclude that, if successful, the investigators will develop and validate an early detection method that can be used in conjunction with standard screening methods. The researchers' efforts will contribute to PanCAN 2020 goal of doubling pancreatic cancer survival.

Mats Grahn commented: "We are extremely grateful to PanCAN for this grant and for giving us the chance to support them in their fantastic efforts to improve the survival rates for the deadliest cancer. We have been working with Drs. Sheppard and Sears as Key Opinion Leaders from the first days of our collaboration with Oregon Health and Science University. We believe that together, we will now be able to accelerate the development of early detection methods for pancreatic cancer in high risk groups, such as new-onset diabetics over the age of 50, familial pancreatic cancer and patients presenting early pancreatic cancer symptoms. We are very much looking forward to the results of this project as it complements and strengthens our new onset diabetes initiatives we have already started, such as collaboration with NCI in December last year".

**For more information, please contact:**

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## **About Immunovia**

Immunovia AB was founded in 2007 by investigators from the Department of Immunotechnology at Lund University and CREATE Health, the Center for Translational Cancer Research in Lund, Sweden. Immunovia's strategy is to decipher the wealth of information in blood and translate it into clinically useful tools to diagnose complex diseases such as cancer, earlier and more accurately than previously possible. Immunovia's core technology platform, IMMray™, is based on antibody biomarker microarray analysis. The company is now performing clinical validation studies for the commercialization of IMMray™ PanCan-d that could be the first blood based test for early diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. In the beginning of 2016, the company started a program focused on autoimmune diseases diagnosis, prognosis and therapy monitoring. The first test from this program, IMMray™ SLE-d, is a biomarker signature derived for differential diagnosis of lupus, now undergoing evaluation and validation. (Source: [www.immunovia.com](http://www.immunovia.com))

This information is information that Immunovia AB is obliged to make public pursuant to the EU Market Abuse Regulation. The information was submitted for publication, through the agency of the contact person set out above.

Immunovia's shares (IMMNOV) are listed on Nasdaq First North in Stockholm and Wildeco is the company's Certified Adviser. For more information, please visit [www.immunovia.com](http://www.immunovia.com).

## **About Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)**

Founded in 1999 in USA, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) is the largest patient advocacy group in the world and is dedicated to fighting the world's toughest cancer. PanCAN's urgent mission is to save lives, and therefore they attack pancreatic cancer on all fronts: research, clinical initiatives, patient services and advocacy. Their effort is amplified by a nationwide network of grassroots support. They are determined to improve patient outcomes today and to double survival by 2020. PanCAN's 2017 grants portfolio covers 17 grants to 21 researchers at 12 institutions for a projected investment of \$4.9 million to support pancreatic cancer research across USA. (<https://www.pancan.org/about-us/>). Dr. Brett Sheppard from Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, Oregon, USA is one of the 12 grantees of the PanCAN 2017 Research Program.

## **Biographical Highlights**

Dr. Sheppard serves as vice chair of surgery and clinical co-director of the Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). The Center's three areas of focus are to develop early detection testing for pancreatic cancer, to establish innovative precision medicine trials for pancreatic cancer patients and to study and develop therapies to enhance quality of life for patients with pancreatic diseases and their families through translational and clinical studies. Dr. Sheppard earned his BSc at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an MS in physiology at the Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. He received his MD from Chicago Medical School and underwent his residency and fellowship at OHSU and the National Cancer Institute, respectively.

Dr. Sears is a professor of molecular & medical genetics and research co-director of the Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care at OHSU. Her expertise includes cellular signaling pathways that control tumor cell phenotype with a focus on their regulation of the c-Myc oncoprotein and how this impacts its expression, transcriptional activity and the regulation of cell function. She earned a BA from Reed College in Portland, Ore., and her PhD from Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. Dr. Sears did her postdoctoral training at Duke University. She joined the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's Scientific & Medical Advisory Board in 2016.

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