ICGC launches new project and releases more genomic data on cancer

Toronto – March 15, 2012. The International Cancer Genome Consortium (ICGC) today announced a new project from South Korea to identify the genomic drivers in breast cancer, which will improve understanding and clinical management of this disease. ICGC today also announced its eighth major data release. The Consortium is ahead of schedule in its decade-long goal to generate high-quality genomic data on more than 25,000 tumors for up to 50 types of cancer that are of clinical and societal importance across the globe.

The Republic of Korea's National Center for Cancer Genomics today is launching a collaborative project in Seoul to analyze breast cancer in Asian women. Dr. Gu Kong, Professor of Pathology, Hanyang University will lead the project in collaboration with prominent scientists from Seoul National University, Asian Medical Center, and Gachon University of Medicine and Science in South Korea. Given that there are significant genomic and lifestyle differences between Caucasian and Asian populations, the genomic data from breast cancer patients in Asia will be compared to the current ICGC breast cancer projects led by the United Kingdom, France and the United States.

"It is our great pleasure to join the ICGC. We believe that genomic data from Asian cancer patients will contribute to the current ICGC breast cancer project both scientifically and clinically," said Dr. Hyung-Lae Kim, Director General of The National Project for Personalized Genomic Medicine, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Korea.

"It's exciting to see how these large-scale cancer genome datasets and the technology being advanced by the ICGC are setting the stage for rapidly bringing more precise diagnostic tests to the clinical management of patients," said Dr. Tom Hudson, President and Scientific Director of the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research and one of the founders of the ICGC.

As of March 2012, the ICGC has received commitments from funding organizations in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America for 47 project teams in 15 jurisdictions to study more than 18,000 tumor genomes.

The ICGC's eighth major data release includes first data releases from France's Liver Cancer project, Germany's Pediatric Brain Cancer project, the United Kingdom's Myelodysplastic Syndrome project as well as updates from the Australian Pancreatic Cancer Project, Canadian Pancreatic Cancer project, Japanese Liver Cancer project, and the United Kingdom Breast Cancer (Triple Negative) project.

This data adds to previous data releases from the Chinese Gastric Cancer project, the Spanish Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia project and submissions from The Cancer Genome Atlas in the United States, which has contributed information on about 10 types of cancer affecting the blood, brain, colon, kidney, lung, ovaries, rectum, and uterus.

The ICGC, comprised of research organizations around the world, is committed to making data rapidly and freely available. Cancer genome data are available on more than 3,493 tumors through an Internet portal at www.icgc.org. Data are available through the ICGC Data Coordination Center housed in Toronto, Canada and through ICGC data portals in the Barcelona Supercomputing Center in Spain and the Queensland Centre for Medical Genomics in Australia.

More than 210 ICGC researchers will come together at the first ICGC meeting to be held in France. From March 20 to 22, 2012 the researchers meeting at the Sixth Scientific Workshop in Cannes will discuss what has been discovered so far and to develop strategies for the future direction of the Consortium. Each ICGC member project is conducting a comprehensive, high-resolution analysis of the full range of genomic changes in at least one specific type or subtype of cancer, with studies built around common standards of data collection and analysis.

"Three years after its launch, the Consortium's coordinated effort has already started to yield fundamental discoveries on how different tumors develop. The ICGC catalogue is starting to amass promising targets for innovative future treatments," said Dr. Fabien Calvo, Deputy General Director, Institut National du Cancer. Current ICGC funding member organizations include:

Australia	National Health & Medical Research Council; Cancer Council New South Wales; Garvan Institute of Medical Research; Queensland State Government; Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland;
Canada	Canada Foundation for Innovation; Genome Canada; Ontario Institute for Cancer Research; Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation; Prostate Cancer Canada
China	Chinese Cancer Genome Consortium; Ministry of Science and Technology; National High Technology Research and Development Program ("863" Program) of China; Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (Observer Status)
European Union	European Commission
France	Institut National du Cancer
Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research; German Cancer Aid
India	Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology
Italy	Italian Ministry of Education University and Research; University of Verona
Japan	National Cancer Center; National Institute of Biomedical Innovation; RIKEN
Mexico	Instituto Carlos Slim de la Salud
Spain	Institute of Health Carlos III; Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation
Saudi Arabia	King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre
South Korea	National Center for Cancer Genomics, National Project for Personalized Genomic Medicine, South Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare
United Kingdom	Bone Cancer Research Trust; Breakthrough Breast

	Cancer; Cancer Research UK; EuroBoNeT; Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund; Skeletal Cancer Action Trust; The Wellcome Trust; Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute
USA	National Cancer Institute; National Human Genome Research Institute; National Institutes of Health

For more information and updates about ICGC activities, please visit the website at: www.icgc.org.

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