



THE TRANSLATIONAL CANCER NETWORK

News from the chairs

Dear readers, we are pleased to announce this first issue of the Translational Cancer Network newsletter including important information on upcoming events and activities within cancer research. The newsletter is one of several initiatives launched by the Translational Cancer Network to promote and strengthening the collaboration between researchers and clinicians focusing on cancer research at Aarhus University, Aarhus University Hospital, and beyond.

The Translational Cancer Network was established in 2023 by the faculty management at Health, and the inaugural meeting on 19 September at Aarhus University Hospital successfully marked the beginning of our network efforts in the coming years. Our initial hope is to engage as many researchers as possible, so the network is broadly anchored, and then to create a formal space where collaborations can be facilitated across seniority, research areas, and backgrounds.

We want to emphasize the need to enable clinicians and non-clinicians to meet and interact so we can collaborate on addressing the unresolved research questions. We hope that the network can help highlight Aarhus as a beacon in cancer research, but in the end, the overarching goal is to help cancer patients in Denmark and worldwide. After all, cancer is the most common diagnosis treated at the hospitals, affecting thousands as both patients and relatives. In the TCR network, our vision is to be able to reach out to the public and patient organisations to disseminate the ongoing research from Aarhus and to receive input to nourish the scientific creativity and ambitions.

During the next couple of years, the network will focus on: 1) Continuous promotion and bridging of basal and clinical research within cancer; 2) Engagement of clinicians and researchers in the network; and 3) establishment of a Junior Faculty that arrange meetings/events on themes related to specific topics, methodologies, and diseases to further encourage and promote networking, research collaborations, and grant applications for younger researchers.

*Signe Borgquist and Martin Roelsgaard Jakobsen
Co-chairs and Managing Professors*

SAVE THE DATE | Public event on translational cancer research, 2024

**28
MAY**

On May 28, 2024, the Translational Cancer Network is bringing together researchers from different departments and faculties at Aarhus University and Aarhus University Hospital for a public event on cancer research.

More information will follow on our [homepage](#).

SAVE THE DATE | Annual meeting of the Translational Cancer Network, 2024

**24
SEP**

On September 24, 2024, the Translational Cancer Network will host its second annual meeting bringing together researchers from Aarhus University and Aarhus University Hospital to network and disseminate ongoing research.

More information will follow on our [homepage](#).

The Translational Cancer Network offers unique opportunities for researchers at all career stages

Impact of the research network

The Translational Cancer Network was founded on the belief that we can bring significant progress to the treatment of cancer patients by securing a natural meeting forum for all interested in cancer research. We need to bring basic researchers and clinicians together to benefit from the strong research already performed at the different departments at AU and AUH. Both from a career point of view and a personal view, joining the network is therefore one of the most important things you could do to your further career. The network is almost certain to open new doors to opportunities and collaborations, and all researchers could benefit from feedback and discussion with other peers who share the same passion about cancer research. In particular, subjects such as collaboration, funding, research dissemination, and career opportunities will be the focus of the network.

To embrace the young researchers, a Junior Faculty is also established – where meetings on specific topics, methodologies, and diseases will serve as the venue for creating long-lasting professional relationships that your current and future research projects could benefit from.

The Translational Cancer Network is open to researchers of all age, including those who are still under education. If you would like to join the network and receive information about all of our upcoming events please click [here](#).

News within cancer research at AU, 2023

Four researchers from Health receive grants from Independent Research Fund Denmark on cancer research.

Clinical Professor **Henrik Hasle** from the Department of Clinical Medicine and the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at Aarhus University Hospital will study the frequency of late complications such as sleep disturbance, changed production of the sleep hormone melatonin and neurovascular damage, and how these factors affect the cognitive ability and quality of life of long-term survivors of paediatric brain tumours.

Professor **Martin Roelsgaard Jakobsen** from the Department of Biomedicine has received a grant for research into how deterioration of the immune system affects cancer patients' response to immunotherapy.

Clinical Associate Professor **Camilla Jensenius Skovhus Kronborg** from the Department of Clinical Medicine and the Danish Centre for Particle Radiotherapy (DCPT) has received a grant for a randomised clinical trial to study the possibilities and results of using proton radiotherapy in treatments of colorectal cancer.

Clinical Professor **Karen-Lise Garm Spindler** from the Department of Clinical Medicine and the Department of Oncology at Aarhus University Hospital has received a grant to develop guidelines for examining and informing about sexual dysfunction following radiotherapy for anal cancer. The project will result in better opportunities for prevention and treatment of late sexual complications in women with anal cancer. Read more about the story [here](#).

Artificial intelligence can predict pancreatic cancer.

Researchers from Gastrointestinal Surgery at the Department of Clinical Medicine at Aarhus University and Aarhus University Hospital have developed an algorithm that, using data from registers, can identify Danes who have a risk of up to 10% of having undetected pancreatic cancer, and who could therefore benefit from targeted screening. Read more about the story [here](#).

Researcher from Health receives DKK 28 million for research into cancer treatment.

The Danish share of a major grant from EU and a group of business partners totalling just over DKK 250 million has been awarded to Professor **Claus Lindbjerg Andersen** and his research team at the Department of Clinical Medicine at AU and the Department of Molecular Medicine (MOMA) at Aarhus University Hospital. Read more about the story [here](#).

Research raises hopes for new treatment of fusion-driven cancer.

Researchers from Aarhus University have developed a new form of gene therapy that can stop cell division in a particularly aggressive type of cancer. Read more about the story [here](#).

New study: Mental illness obstructs cancer screening.

A new study from Aarhus University shows that far too many people with psychological challenges do not accept offers of colorectal cancer screening. This is a problem, given the higher cancer mortality for Danes with mental illness. Read more about the story [here](#).

Associate professor receives 10 million DKK for groundbreaking kidney cancer research.

Iben Lyskjær Heimann, an associate professor at the Department of Clinical Medicine, has been appointed as a new Lundbeck Foundation Fellow and receives a sum of 10 million Danish kroner for a new research project, which she hopes can lead to improved kidney cancer treatment. Read more about the story [here](#).

Two researchers from Health receive grants from Independent Research Fund Denmark on cancer research.

Associate Professor **Lasse Sommer Kristensen** from the Department of Biomedicine has received DKK 2,880,000 to shed light on some completely new basic molecular mechanisms in bowel cancer through so-called circular RNA molecules.

Clinical professor and chair **Holger Jon Møller** from the Department of Clinical Medicine has received DKK 2,059,200 to measure tumor-supporting proteins in the blood of bladder cancer patients to assess disease severity and determine appropriate treatment. Read more about the story [here](#).

Top European radiotherapy honour bestowed on Aarhus professor.

Clinical professor **Cai Grau**, Head of Research at the Danish Centre for Particle Therapy, has been bestowed with the esteemed ESTRO Breur Award, recognizing his significant contributions to the field of European radiotherapy. Read more about the story [here](#).

Study unlocks potential new treatment strategy for aggressive childhood cancer.

Researchers from Aarhus University, University of Zurich and Stanford University might have found strategy to prevent cancer growth in patients suffering from alveolar rhabdomyosarcoma – a cancer known for its aggressive nature and resistance to chemotherapy. Read more about the story [here](#).

Two new professors at Health focusing on cancer research

Lene Niemann Nejsum is pr 1. of March appointed as new [professor](#) at Department of Clinical Medicine specialising in epithelial function in normal and pathological physiology. [Lenes](#) research group focuses on a group of proteins, aquaporins, which are water channel proteins that are important in regulating the body's fluid balance, and where incorrect regulation may manifest itself in a wide range of diseases associated with altered fluid balance. In addition, recent research has shown that aquaporins are involved in the development and spread of many cancers, including breast cancer.

Ole Graumann is pr 1. of June 2023 appointed as new clinical [professor](#) and chair in Radiology at the Department of Clinical Medicine and Aarhus University Hospital's Radiology Department. [Ole](#) has a broad field of research within radiology, covering, inter alia, cancer, clinical ultrasound and artificial intelligence. Previously, Ole has for example conducted research into minimally invasive freezing treatment of cancer, and in artificial intelligence for screening for breast cancer or blood clots in the brain.

Relevant links and funding opportunities

The Research Support Office publishes a newsletter monthly including funding opportunities within [health research](#). Register for and read the newsletter at the [Research Support Office website](#).

Link to [Health travel grants](#).

Input for the newsletter

The Translational Cancer Network would like to share and promote all relevant news and activities within the network via our newsletter. The newsletter is published approx. twice a year.

We therefore encourage you to submit any input and news of interest to the network (e.g. publications, grants, conferences, seminars, open positions) to research-networks.health@au.dk.

Deadline for input to the next newsletter: **1 April 2024**
