Northern Ireland Leads in National Digital Pathology Research Programme

A national digital molecular pathology research programme led by the Belfast CRUK Center has been awarded the highly competitive CRUK Accelerator Award.

PathXL is a global pioneer in the use of web-based solutions for digital pathology

BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND, UK, August 19, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A national digital molecular pathology research programme led by the Belfast Cancer Research UK (CRUK) Center has been awarded the highly competitive CRUK Accelerator Award. Using PathXL software, this programme will link a number of major UK research centers, support multicenter collaboration in cancer research and use digital pathology to drive molecular pathology, immuno-oncology and the delivery of precision medicine.

Considered the ideal translational research environment, the CRUK Belfast center was selected to lead the programme and, over the next 5 years, through collaboration and training with consortium centers will seek to embed digital pathology within an extensive tissue and molecular oncology programme. It will also allow the consortium to drive digital pathology standards, consistency and interoperability across their centers, which include: University of Southampton, University of Manchester, University College London, Institute of Cancer Research and University of Newcastle.

PathXL Xplore™ software for digital pathology research management will be central to the delivery of this programme, providing the backbone for an integrated CRUK digital pathology network, managing multiple image formats, supporting the exchange of image and analytical data between centers, accelerating pathology workflow and establishing a UK-wide digital pathology infrastructure for standardization. PathXL TissueMark™ software will be used for automated tumor identification, molecular profiling and next generation sequencing in solid tumors, and as a means of improving sample quality and tumor sufficiency in molecular pathology.

PathXL software will also be used in conjunction with third party image analysis platforms to establish multicenter standards in digital pathology and new quantitative image analysis and computer vision technology in immuno-oncology.

Software and training will be rolled out during the first 12-18 months of the programme across the five key UK university centers with significant expansion across the QUB existing central facilities.

Professor David Waugh, Director of the Centre for Cancer Centre and Cell Biology, said, "The selection of this research programme submitted by the Belfast CRUK Centre is further proof that Queen's cancer researchers are at the cutting edge of the latest innovations to improve outcomes for cancer patients across the world. Through this new research programme we will develop knowledge that can inform the targeted use of immunotherapeutic agents in cancer patients."

"We are thrilled to receive this award and I congratulate my colleagues Prof Peter Hamilton and Prof Manuel Salto-Tellez, in leading this successful bid. It is further recognition of the powerful alliance that our Centre is forging with local and international industry to deliver new advances in cancer care."

Des Speed, CEO of PathXL said, "We are delighted that this innovative research project is progressing to implementation, and are looking forward to working with all centers in the consortium. It is very exciting to be at the forefront of this UK-wide strategy for digital and molecular pathology in cancer, which has the potential to drive dramatic change. This award is further recognition that Northern Ireland is leading the way in developing digital pathology, and of the strength of the PathXL software platform."

About PathXL
PathXL is a global pioneer in the use of web-based solutions for digital pathology, and provides innovative software for use in drug discovery research, clinical sectors, biomarker analysis and education. Their product for the automated identification and annotation of tumor tissue, TissueMark, was awarded the Frost and Sullivan 2014 European New Product Innovation Award for Automated Image Analysis for Digital Pathology.

About Belfast CRUK Center
CRUK researchers in Belfast are experts at identifying faulty genes and molecules in tumors. Many clinical trials in Belfast target these genes and molecules to test potential new ways to diagnose and treat cancer, especially hard-to-treat and more advanced cancers. Bringing together the best teams from Queen's University Belfast, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other local organizations to help beat cancer sooner.

Press release courtesy of Online PR Media: http://bit.ly/1HWy962

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