

AMMF funded research reveals promising new target for the treatment of cholangiocarcinoma (bile duct cancer)

STANSTED, ESSEX, UNITED KINGDOM, November 24, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research from a five-year study led by the Centre for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Edinburgh suggests that disruption of a chemical messenger TWEAK could disrupt the growth of a rare and devastating liver cancer, cholangiocarcinoma, and so improve the effectiveness of current treatments for the disease.

The research was co-funded by [AMMF](#), the UK's first and only cholangiocarcinoma charity, and has been published in the [Journal of Hepatology](#).

Cholangiocarcinoma, or bile duct cancer, is resistant to chemotherapy and has a high recurrence following surgery, with less than 25% of patients surviving more than five years. In cholangiocarcinoma, tumour growth is driven by interactions between tumour cells and other cells that form a supportive environment. A chemical messenger, TWEAK, produced by immune cells (macrophages) changes the natural immune response and increases the growth of the cancer.

Results obtained from the study led by Professor Stuart Forbes of the Centre for Regenerative Medicine, and supported by Associate Professor Nina Tirnitz-Parker from Curtin University, Perth, Australia, with support from the National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia, showed that a mouse with the Fn14 gene deleted and mice dosed with an antibody that inhibits the effects of TWEAK both indicate that the TWEAK pathway shows promise as a target for future therapies.

As Professor Stuart Forbes explains, "We have found that the environment surrounding the cancer is very important in driving its growth. We are excited by this finding because it offers a new target for treatment of this aggressive and life-limiting cancer."

Helen Morement, CEO of AMMF, says, "AMMF is delighted to have been able to support the dedicated team in Edinburgh in this potentially ground-breaking research which not only provides a real step forward in improving our understanding of this cancer, but also towards some long awaited possible improvements in treatment which is now even more important than ever. With increasing incidence globally, mortality that mirrors that incidence, and no improvement in survival for decades, cholangiocarcinoma is an under-researched, much

neglected, truly devastating disease which desperately needs pioneering scientific discoveries like this.”

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Notes to Editor:

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About AMMF

AMMF was founded and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission in 2002 (registered charity no 1091915). AMMF is the UK's only cholangiocarcinoma charity, dedicated to tackling this devastating cancer on all fronts: providing information and support, campaigning to raise awareness, and encouraging and supporting research.

In recent years, an enormous and extremely worrying worldwide increase in cholangiocarcinoma's incidence has been noted. Latest figures show there were 2,161 deaths caused by cholangiocarcinoma in 2013 in England alone (NCIN/Cancer52 report). The incidence appears to be increasing across all age groups, including younger people, and the cause of this ongoing increase is unknown. Much more research is desperately needed.

AMMF is dedicated to bringing about improvement for the cholangiocarcinoma patient, working closely throughout the UK with patients, families, carers, clinicians, healthcare professionals, researchers, politicians, and policy makers, and collaborating internationally.

For more information, visit: <http://www.ammf.org.uk/> (registered charity no 1091915).

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