

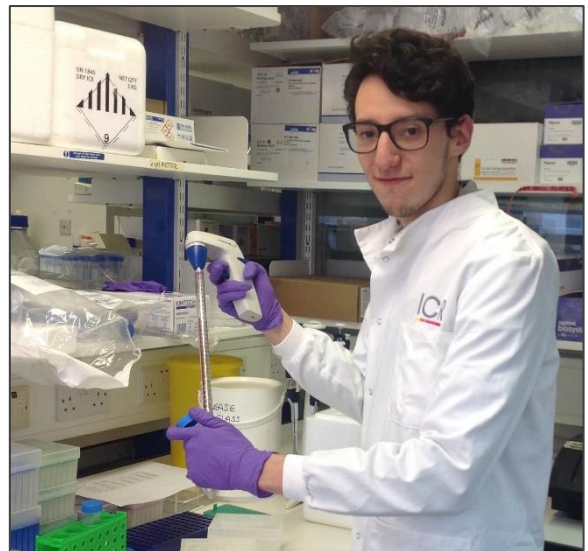


PENGUINS AGAINST CANCER

2018 Fergus Fund Research Bursary Awarded

Penguins Against Cancer is delighted to announce that it has awarded its 2018 £5,000 “Fergus Fund” research bursary to Antonio Romo-Morales, to help fund his research into Ewing sarcoma.

Antonio is halfway through a 4-year PhD studentship in the Sarcoma Molecular Pathology Team at the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR). Antonio’s project is focused on identifying novel, more effective and kinder treatments for Ewing sarcoma, a rare type of cancer that can affect children as well as adults. Using more representative models than previously available for this aggressive tumour, the objective of the project is to find a combination therapy that can be readily introduced into the clinic.



To achieve this, Antonio is testing test drugs that inhibit DNA repair processes in combination with irinotecan, a standard chemotherapeutic agent that is currently used to treat Ewing sarcoma. The reasoning behind this approach is that Ewing sarcoma cells are particularly dependant on mechanisms that repair their DNA. Therefore, when these processes are interrupted by a drug treatment, tumour cells are not be able to survive the damage caused by chemotherapy. In this way, the plan is to enhance the response of Ewing sarcoma tumours to the current treatment and potentially reduce the dose and toxicity of the chemotherapy through a more targeted approach. In this study, drugs that have already been used in patients with other types of cancer are being prioritised, which will enable any findings from this work to be readily translated to treat Ewing sarcoma patients.

The Fergus Scholefield Cancer Research Fund grant will make it possible to investigate how the drug candidates behave within our experimental system. Experiments will determine the exact drug concentration that it is present in Ewing sarcoma models for comparison with measurements reported for samples from patients with other cancers. This information is key to confirm the feasibility of the treatment and work towards more effective treatments and reducing the dosing to have less toxic and kinder treatments. In this way this research will lead to improving the outcome for patients with Ewing sarcomas.

Simon Hughes, Lead Trustee for the Fergus Fund and Associate Clinical Dean of St Thomas' Cluster, GKT School of Medicine at the King's College Faculty of Life Sciences & Medicine, says:

"We're very excited to be supporting Antonio's research, under Professor Shipley's team at the world-famous Institute of Cancer Research. Their project has direct clinical relevance for both children and adults diagnosed with this rare cancer. The new drug combinations under development could lead to better cure rates, with fewer side-effects."

Penguins Against Cancer

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