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123 QUESTIONS TO...



Martin Schlumberger,
Director of the School
of Cancer Sciences

How are things looking at the start of this new academic year?

Pretty good! Created just three years ago, the School has already trained some 2,800 people and delivered 40,000 hours of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. And these figures are set to rise with the expansion of our training offer: this year we're launching three brand new university qualifications and we will ultimately offer dedicated programmes for each organ speciality.

Do you have any plans in terms of teaching innovations?

We have now completed the multimedia renovation of our classrooms and we plan to inaugurate our web-teaching platform in 2015. The first scripted courses will begin soon. It is essential that we develop this form of modern teaching.

What are the School's strengths?

First of all, the breadth of our training offer designed to appeal to a wide range of medical or paramedical professionals. The School also guarantees the excellence of its teaching through the quality of the people delivering it, be they opinion leaders from the Institute or teaching staff from Paris-Sud University. Moreover, we are working with the latter to turn the School of Cancer Sciences into the Oncology Department of its Faculty of Medicine. This new legal status will pool the oncology expertise of our two structures, making our school unique in France. ■

Discover the School of Cancer Sciences' training programme guide on the Gustave Roussy website, in the Teaching section

NEWS

NEW PROSPECTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF ADVANCED MELANOMA

The emergence of «targeted therapies» has transformed the management of metastatic melanoma, an increasingly common skin cancer for which there were previously no effective treatments. Unfortunately, these advanced therapy medicinal products are not enough in themselves to conquer the disease. A major study published by Gustave Roussy researchers has paved the way for new strategies to overcome this problem.



For the past three years, targeted therapies – vemurafenib (Zelboraf) and dabrafenib (Tafinlar) – have offered new hope to patients suffering from melanoma diagnosed at an advanced stage and for whom the prognosis is poor. Inhibiting the activity of a mutant protein (BRAF) involved in the proliferation of cancer cells, these therapies are effective in around half of patients (those who carry the mutation), but often lose their efficacy over time. Dr Caroline Robert, Head of the Dermatology Department at Gustave Roussy, and Stéphan Vagner, Inserm research director, are therefore trying to understand and overcome the resistance mechanisms involved. Their research, carried out in the predictive biomarkers and new molecular strategies for cancer treatment laboratory, is now uncovering these mechanisms. The importance of their discoveries led to the results being published in the September issue of the highly prestigious international journal Nature.

dubbed eIF4F, which regulate the production of proteins inside cells. Biopsies conducted in patients have shown that the formation of this complex is reduced in tumour cells that respond well to anti-BRAF treatments, whereas it is increased in resistant cells.

Therefore we now have access to a new marker to predict the efficacy of targeted therapies. What's more, during experiments conducted in the lab, scientists demonstrated that compounds inhibiting this eIF4F complex, developed by a CNRS pharmacology team at the University of Strasbourg, were liable to boost the efficacy of vemurafenib. A crucially important result, since it paves the way for new treatment options. ■

A new marker available to scientists

Researchers have discovered, in fact, that the various mechanisms involved in resistance to targeted anti-BRAF therapies share a common aspect: an assembly of molecules,

1- Inserm - Gustave Roussy - Université Paris-XI joint research unit, attached to the Institut de recherche intégrée en cancérologie à Villejuif (Villejuif Integrated Cancerology Research Institute).

PORTRAIT



Suzanne Ferary, a teacher at Gustave Roussy and volunteer alongside Prof. Jean Lemerle as well as for several associations

Tributes have poured in for Suzanne Ferary, following the news of her death on 28 August.

A primary school teacher, she had taught in Gustave Roussy's Paediatric Oncology Department until she retired in 2002. But before and after her retirement, «dedicated, cheerful and dynamic, she was always ready to go the extra mile in her quest to help others», says Catherine Steenman, a manager in the Department's secretarial department.

Alongside Prof. Jean Lemerle, Head of the Department from 1978 to 1996 and Deputy Director of the Institute from 1994 to 2001, who sadly also left us this year, she supported the actions of the Groupe franco-africain d'oncologie pédiatrique (GFAOP - Franco-African Paediatric Oncology Group). «For her, nothing was impossible», stresses Christine Géricot, a former art teacher at Gustave Roussy. «Memorably, she found sponsors to take a 2CV car, decorated by children hospitalised at Gustave Roussy, all the way to Bamako, and accompanied young patients from the Institute on the trip. The car now serves as a taxi for sick children in Mali.»

«Her primary concern was always the interests of children with cancer», adds Pierre Roger-Machart, from the GFAOP's Support Committee. Ghislaine Ditchev-Compeyron, from the Terre bleue Unesco charitable association, salutes «her determination to see initiatives through to their completion, in the name of urgency and humanity, together with her unflinching optimism in the face of obstacles and difficulties». As for the young patients in Dakar, they are grateful for the «strength, courage and love» she gave them. ■

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The annual report, statement of medical activities, sources and uses of funds statement for the Institute and the Foundation are available on the Gustave Roussy website. Firstly, the annual report - a strategic and fundamental document - provides a panorama of the Institute's life in its three fields of activity: patient care, research and teaching. The 2013 annual report, entitled «The relationship continues», shows that, despite a year marked by budgetary constraints, including reduced tariffs and a decrease in revenue allocated to healthcare institutions, Gustave Roussy just about breaks even.

The statement of medical activities reviews the past year for each department and presents activity indicators for the hospital as whole. For 2013, it highlights the development of new complete hospitalisation activities, radiotherapy and outpatient care, which have helped the institute balance its books.

DECIPHER

REPORTS, FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, ACCOUNTS: TRANSPARENCY AT GUSTAVE ROUSSY

Gustave Roussy publishes several documents that offer those interested a clear vision of the Institute's projects, activities and finances over the past year.

With its annual sources and uses of funds statement, Gustave Roussy reports on how the funds raised thanks to the generosity of donors have been used. With donations up 16% in 2013 compared to 2012, the institute was able to invest almost €4 million in tomotherapy equipment, while over €5.3 million was made available to research teams.

In addition, the Gustave Roussy Foundation also issues a sources and uses of funds statement each year. In 2013, it presented the results of the first Revolution cancer campaign, which raised €11 million in three years to speed up the emergence of tailored medicine. ■

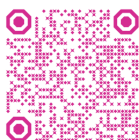
These four documents are available in full on the website, in the Annual reports section.

IN OCTOBER, GUSTAVE ROUSSY IS PRETTY IN PINK



Once again, Gustave Roussy is pulling out all the stops for Pink October, designed to raise awareness of breast cancer, by getting involved in three major charity events: the 5th socially-responsible shopping initiative organised by the Printemps Nation department store, a giant «zumbathon» being held on the esplanade of the château de Vincennes and the Odyssea walk/run. In the space of five years, the latter has raised 1.15 million euros for cancer research.

From 6 to 12 October, the Institute will play host to karate and médiété demonstrations, associations, an information day on going back to work, as well as SKIN «L'Autre», an exhibition of work created by patient-artist pairings. Finally, health professionals from Gustave Roussy will give lectures organised by the ERI (Espace de Rencontres et d'Information - Meeting and Information Space) throughout the month. ■



SCAN
For more information



To find out more:
www.gustaveroussy.fr