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## 123 QUESTIONS FOR...



**Alexander  
Eggermont,**  
Director General  
at Gustave Roussy

### *You've just created Cancer Core Europe. Can you tell us about it?*

It's a consortium of six of the biggest cancer centres in Europe brought together to form a unique strike force against the disease: Gustave Roussy for France, the Cambridge Cancer Centre in England, the Karolinska Institute in Sweden, the Netherlands Cancer Institute in the Netherlands, the Vall d'Hebron Institute of Oncology in Spain and the German Cancer Research Center - National Center for Tumor Diseases in Germany. Taken together, these centres represent more than one million patient consultations and 300,000 patients treated.

### *Why have these centres been brought together?*

The purpose behind the consortium is to achieve the necessary critical mass to manage the considerable diversity of genetic mutations seen in tumours today. It creates the foundation for personalised medicine, the cancer treatment of the future. So together, we're going to construct a continuum between clinical research and patient care, and reinforce this so-called «translational» research designed to accelerate the transfer of innovations from bench to bedside.

### *Why these six partners?*

We've brought together six centres of excellence, all of whom know each other well. Cancer Core Europe will enable us to better communicate on joint research programs already under way, before bringing in other partners. ■

## PINK OCTOBER AT GUSTAVE ROUSSY

Once again, Gustave Roussy pulled out all the stops for the Pink October initiative, designed to raise the public's awareness of breast cancer and the latest treatment advances



A centre of excellence in breast cancer care and research, Gustave Roussy mobilised for the 21st Pink October initiative, the international awareness month focusing on a disease that affects one in eight women during the course of their life.

Throughout «Pink October at Gustave Roussy», the Institute's teams dedicated themselves to providing the public with information and discussing the issues with them. They presented some of the treatment innovations available for patients at the centre: immediate breast reconstruction, personalised radiotherapy programme, early diagnosis using image-guided macrobiopsy, the molecular profiling of tumours, the integration of immunotherapy into the therapeutic arsenal, etc. A range of other themes were also covered during lectures and debates, including returning to work after the disease, the principles and side effects of radiotherapy, physiotherapy following breast cancer, etc.

A number of partner associations also joined forces with the Institute, with information stands on cosmetic treatments, well-being and leisure activities, as well as médiété and karate demonstrations by the CAMI Sport and Cancer association...

Finally, patients and visitors were able to enjoy a photo exhibition, entitled «L'autre» («The Other Person»), displaying works by artist-patient pairings brought together by the SKIN association.

### **Solidarity and generosity**

Pink October was also an opportunity to highlight the contribution of the general public alongside Gustave Roussy. For the 6th year running, money raised during the Odyssea walk/run in Paris on 4 and 5 October was donated to the Institute. Gustave Roussy was handed a cheque for more than €470,000, including €100,000 raised from the socially-responsible shopping initiative organised by the Printemps Nation department store and donations collected during a giant «zumbathon» held on 4 October.

These funds represent crucial support for Gustave Roussy, helping it to develop research programmes focusing on personalised treatments for breast cancer. Over the past 6 years, the Odyssea event has raised almost €2 million for the Institute, financing major projects such as the Safir 1 clinical trial, the purchase of a DNA sequencer to analyse patients' genes, and a psycho-oncology study focusing on patients' quality of life. ■

ACTU



**Valérie Dejean,**  
Head of the Clinical  
Research Operations  
Department (SORC)

With a PhD in molecular chemistry and more than 15 years' experience gained in the field of clinical research working with several global health industry leaders, Valérie Dejean decided to join Gustave Roussy «to be part of a resolutely innovative environment dedicated to excellence and a strategy of differentiation once again», she explains, «since the Institute's integrated research programmes and experts make it a unique facility in the fight against cancer today». But Valérie Dejean also brings her expertise to the Institute «for its human dimension, because I've always strived to ensure my work is driven by innovation to improve quality of life», she confides.

Responsible for a team of 80 people working on almost 400 research projects (Phase I paediatric uniquely, Phases II, III, IV and non-interventional studies), she has injected «a new way of being and doing», she adds. Setting high standards for both herself and those around her, she has succeeded in motivating her teams and galvanising the activities of the SORC, both optimising and increasing the volume of activities and financial performance, in particular. In fact her team even follows her lead out on the track... when the purpose is to raise funds, as it was when they took part in the «Children without cancer» charity run/walk back in September (see opposite). The Imagine for Margo association awarded its Coup de cœur prize to Valérie Dejean and the SORC team for their commitment to the cause. ■

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## CHILDREN WITHOUT CANCER € 665,000 TO TACKLE CHILDHOOD CANCER!

Every year, the Imagine for Margo association organises its «Children without cancer» fundraising run/walk. The money raised from the 2014 event will go towards financing the BIOMEDE1 study, a European clinical trial coordinated by Gustave Roussy.

On 28 September 2014, the 1,600 participants in the third «Children without cancer» run/walk could be seen pounding the alleyways of the Saint-Cloud park, in the suburbs of Paris. The charity event is aimed at raising money to fund clinical research programmes on new drugs to tackle childhood cancer. The distinctive feature of the event is that in order to take part each runner has to raise a minimum of €200 from their friends and family. As a result, this year 12,000 individual donations totalling €665,000 were made to the Imagine for Margo association for research into brainstem gliomas.

### The BIOMEDE hope

This rare cancer, which affects the supportive tissue surrounding neurons, occurs in children around 6 years old; there is currently no effective long-term treatment. It is this absence of treatment that led to the development of BIOMEDE in France and Europe within the ITCC2 consortium. «Three new drugs, used alongside radiotherapy, will be tested during this personalised medicine trial. They will be offered to patients on the basis of their individual genetic profile», explains Jacques Grill, paediatric oncologist at the Institute and trial coordinator. A glimmer of hope for the dozens of young patients and their families affected by the disease. ■

- BIOlogical MEDicine for diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma Eradication..
- Innovative Therapies for Children with Cancer.

## IN THE SHOES OF A RESEARCHER



### What is molecular medicine? How does a cell function?...

On Saturday 29 November 2014, some 200 donors will get the opportunity to put themselves «in the shoes of a researcher» and gain a better understanding of the work of the teams they support. The Institute has a real treat in store for them. Over the course of a few hours, they will be plunged into the world of personalised medicine and take part in a number of fun and interactive activities designed to give them an insight into the major aspects of research: documentary analyses, budgeting, carrying out experiments, presentation of results, etc. Accompanied by Gustave Roussy's researchers and doctors, they will more fully appreciate the work of the Institute's teams and the very concrete impact of their support in terms of accelerating the research programmes under way at Gustave Roussy. ■