

## **Oxford University news release**

**30 January 2013**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **INDOX expansion boosts cancer research across India**

Five cancer centres across India are joining the INDOX Cancer Research Network throughout January 2013. INDOX is a partnership between the University of Oxford and leading Indian cancer centres which coordinates research aimed at reducing the death and suffering caused by cancer in India.

This expansion of the network brings the total number of Indian partner centres to 12, and was made possible by a grant from Sanofi Oncology as part of their commitment to help build research capacity for Indian cancer centres.

The addition of new centres to the network will allow INDOX to scale up its clinical research across India, including geographical areas where it did not previously have coverage. Three of the new centres will be in the previously unrepresented East of the country, including the Tata Medical Centre in Kolkata.

The new centres joining the network are: Birla Cancer Centre, SMS Medical College Hospital, Jaipur; Cachar Cancer Hospital & Research Centre, Silchar; Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai; Gujarat Cancer Research Institute, Ahmedabad; Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata.

INDOX Director Dr Raghiv Ali of the University of Oxford said: 'We now have centres in all the major regions of India which is important for clinical research in a country of over a billion people. There are large differences in the lifestyle and habits of people in different parts of India as well as genetic variation, and the incidence of different types of cancer also varies by region.'

Three of the new centres are already involved in the largest study of common causes of cancer ever conducted in India, which is coordinated by INDOX. The formal addition of these centres to the network will enable researchers to share resources and information more easily. Membership of the INDOX network also gives centres the opportunity to send staff to Oxford University for specialist training.

Dr Mohandas Mallath, INDOX Principal Investigator for Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata, said: 'Admission to the INDOX network is a great opportunity for the many young oncologists at the Tata Medical Centre who are eager to participate in cooperative clinical research and looking to enhance their clinical research skills. The centre will in turn will strengthen the INDOX network by enrolling patients from Eastern India and thereby complete the full spectrum of the Indian population for INDOX studies.'

Professor TS Ganesan, INDOX Principal Investigator for Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai, said: 'The INDOX network, comprising all the major cancer treatment centres in India together with the University of Oxford, is a major step in improving the quality of clinical research which will ultimately benefit Indian patients. Our institution will gain in training younger oncologists, augmenting clinical trials and supporting epidemiological research.'

Dr Hemant Malhotra, INDOX Principal Investigator for Birla Cancer Centre, SMS Medical College Hospital, Jaipur, said: 'We are very excited to be a part of the world-class INDOX

group of investigators. As the group addresses India-specific issues and problems, we are looking forward to some answers which are really relevant and important to us.'

Sanofi Oncology Head, Dr. Debasish Roychowdhury said: 'Our commitment to delivering cancer care to Indian patients in most need has never been stronger. The expansion of the INDOX network underscores this commitment and opens the way for patient access to clinical trial research across India.'

**For more information please contact INDOX Director Dr Raghieb Ali at [raghib.ali@ndm.ox.ac.uk](mailto:raghib.ali@ndm.ox.ac.uk) or INDOX Project Coordinator Mary Foulkes on +44 (0)1865 289679 or [mary.foulkes@ceu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:mary.foulkes@ceu.ox.ac.uk)**

**Or the University of Oxford press office on +44 (0)1865 280533 or [press.office@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:press.office@admin.ox.ac.uk)**

### Notes to Editors

\* **The INDOX Cancer Research Network** was established in 2005 as a partnership between the Institute of Cancer Medicine at the University of Oxford and India's leading academic cancer centres. INDOX's aim is to enable research of crucial importance to the Indian population to be designed and conducted by Indian cancer research institutions for the benefit of the people of India. INDOX has already established itself as one of India's leading academic oncology networks, conducting a number of clinical and epidemiological studies in common cancers in India and providing training and fellowships to over 100 Indian clinicians and scientists. <http://indox.org.uk/>

\* **Sanofi Oncology** is dedicated to translating science into effective therapeutics that address unmet medical needs for cancer and organ transplant patients. Starting with a deep understanding of the disease and the patient, Sanofi Oncology employs innovative approaches to drug discovery and clinical development, understanding the value of partnerships that combine internal scientific expertise with that of external industry and academic experts. The Sanofi Oncology portfolio includes 10 marketed products and more than 15 investigational compounds in clinical development, including small molecules and biological agents.

\* **Oxford University's Medical Sciences Division** is one of the largest biomedical research centres in Europe, with over 2,500 people involved in research and more than 2,800 students. The University is rated the best in the world for medicine, and it is home to the UK's top-ranked medical school.

From the genetic and molecular basis of disease to the latest advances in neuroscience, Oxford is at the forefront of medical research. It has one of the largest clinical trial portfolios in the UK and great expertise in taking discoveries from the lab into the clinic. Partnerships with the local NHS Trusts enable patients to benefit from close links between medical research and healthcare delivery.

A great strength of Oxford medicine is its long-standing network of clinical research units in Asia and Africa, enabling world-leading research on the most pressing global health challenges such as malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS and flu. Oxford is also renowned for its large-scale studies which examine the role of factors such as smoking, alcohol and diet on cancer, heart disease and other conditions.