

International liver cancer congress provides possible solutions to reduce significant burden

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Today, world renowned experts have assembled in Dubrovnik, Croatia to discuss the latest trends in treatment and cutting edge research in diagnostic techniques that will shape the future management of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) - the third most common cause of cancer-related death globally, and a leading cause of death among patients with liver cirrhosis.

"This HCC conference is a significant milestone in the field of HCC research. We are encouraged by the range of topics and eminent researchers in attendance, bringing new understanding and celebrating new research opportunities from across the world that will help address the current challenges we face as clinicians. This ultimately will help drive our ultimate goal of reducing the suffering caused by this devastating and debilitating disease," commented Professor Josep M Llovet, chair of the HCC special conference and Professor of Research, Liver Unit, Hospital Clínic, Barcelona, Spain and Professor of Medicine, Director, Mount Sinai [Liver Cancer](#) Research Program, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York.

At the two-day conference, entitled: Hepatocellular [Carcinoma](#) from genomics to treatment, organised by the European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL), experts will address a range of key topics, including: the genetic make-up of HCC, the molecular signatures and biomarkers and other advancements to determine diagnosis and

prognosis of HCC, and potential disease targets to develop new treatment strategies. Specifically, several novel molecular targeted therapies are currently being tested in advanced stages of clinical research, and their results expected by 2011-14 might improve the standard of care of patients suffering this neoplasm.

HCC is a cancer originating in liver cells and is one of the most common types of tumour. Worldwide, HCC accounts for approximately 5.4% of all cancers and causes 610,000 deaths per year. It is the fifth most common cause of cancer in men and the eighth most common cause in women. HCC is the most common cancer in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia mainly due to the high rates of HCV and HBV infection. In western countries, alcoholism and viral hepatitis are the leading causes of cirrhosis and subsequent HCC.

The HCC conference is supported by leading professional organisations across the world, including the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), the Asian Pacific Association for Study of the Liver (APASL) and the Latin-American for the Study of the Liver (ALEH).

"EASL is dedicated to promoting research and education in the field of hepatology to improve the treatment of liver disease throughout the world. In bringing experts together at this first-ever medical conference on HCC we aim to promote the latest evidence base and best practise to address this significant global killer disease," added Professor Heiner Wedemeyer, EASL Secretary General.

In line with the importance of the meeting, EASL would like to inform its members and the conference delegates that the European Commission Seventh Framework Programme (FP7-Health 2010) has funded the HEPTROMIC project, a 3-year translational research initiative on [liver](#) cancer. This network, aimed at solving molecular and

technological challenges, constitutes the first European research project specifically focused on genomics in HCC funded by the European Union. With the final negotiations with the European Commission well underway, HEPTROMIC is currently gearing up to become a decisive modern cooperative and multidisciplinary effort in the fight against this cancer. Led from the Institut d'Investigacions Biomèdiques August Pi i Sunyer (IDIBAPS) - Hospital Clínic of Barcelona (Spain), this initiative combines the knowhow of six leading research groups in Europe and the USA and two companies, to ensure the translation of research results into new prognostic tests and devices.

More information: References

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