

Developing new anti-cancer medicines

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The prospect of four new cancer medicines becoming a reality for patients has taken a huge step forward with the announcement of a £34M investment by a European private biotech company in University research.

ProTide is a platform developed by Professor Chris McGuigan and his team at Cardiff University's School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. ProTides are specifically designed to bypass key [cancer](#) cell resistance pathways that limit the efficacy of so many of today's [anti-cancer drugs](#).

Edinburgh based [biopharmaceutical company](#), NuCana, has announced a new £34M [investment](#) to develop its portfolio of anti-cancer medicines based on ProTide technology.

The funds will be used to advance and expand the clinical programme for NuCana's lead product, Acelarin, which has shown exceptional results in [patients](#) with a broad range of advanced and progressive cancers that were resistant to all conventional therapies.

Acelarin will be developed initially for patients with pancreatic, biliary, lung and ovarian cancers. In addition, the funding means the company plans to bring a second ProTide (NUC-3373) into the clinic later this year, with two further ProTides scheduled for 2015.

"It is very exciting to watch a new medicine emerge, from a theoretical idea, through chemical synthesis in our laboratory here in Cardiff and now as a new treatment for patients with cancer" according to Professor McGuigan, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, who developed the ProTide technology.

"This £34M investment is extremely satisfying and an endorsement of our work with NuCana. Over the last decade this represents the 14th largest private biotech round globally and the largest ever in the UK," he added.

The financing is led by a new investor, US based venture capital firm Sofinnova Ventures. The deal was completed by substantial investments from the largest shareholder, Paris based Sofinnova Partners, alongside other existing major investors Morningside Ventures, Alida Capital International and the Scottish Investment Bank.

NuCana has exclusive worldwide rights to the pioneering ProTide technology in cancer. This technology creates compounds that bypass

key resistance mechanisms associated with anti-cancer drugs.

"We are delighted to be working with Chris McGuigan and the team in Cardiff. Over the years we have had a very constructive and productive collaboration with Cardiff University that is now bringing real benefits to patients," said Hugh S Griffith, the Co-Founder and CEO of NuCana.

Professor McGuigan added: "NuCana's ProTide platform has the potential to deliver to patients novel, first-in-class anti-cancer medicines. We are excited to be working with the company's experienced leadership team in the development programme.

"This investment is a real vote of confidence in our research and its application by NuCana. Together this brings real potential for developing new and powerful medicines to treat cancer."

Provided by Cardiff University

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