

New cancer treatment to be tested

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The Swedish Medical Products Agency and the Regional Ethics Committee have approved the initiation of a clinical trial for a completely new form of neuroendocrine cancer treatment that uses an oncolytic virus. The virus owes its development to donations from thousands of people all over the world.

Since 2007, professor Magnus Essand and researchers Justyna Leja-Jarblad and Kjell Öberg at Uppsala University have been developing a completely new treatment for neuroendocrine tumours. The treatment consists of an [oncolytic virus](#) which is remarkably effective at destroying neuroendocrine tumours in mice.

Donations from thousands of people, including a large gift of two million Swiss francs from the late businessman Vince Hamilton, has allowed the Oncolytic Virus Fund to collect enough money to enable Magnus Essand and his research group to start clinical studies. These will be the first clinical studies in the world on a genetically modified [virus](#) which specifically attacks neuroendocrine tumours. The virus treatment has been named AdVince in recognition of Vince Hamilton's commitment to and strong support for this research.

The Swedish Medical Products Agency and the Regional Ethical Review Board in Uppsala recently gave the OK to start treating [patients](#). There are many requirements which must be fulfilled in order to carry out clinical testing on humans. From when the AdVince virus treatment was first produced, it has taken two years to obtain the go-ahead.

'It is, of course, a very good feeling,' says Magnus Essand.

'Our first patient recently signed up for the treatment and more and more will follow. The first 12 patients are part of the Phase I study in which the dose will be successively increased in order to find out if there are any side effects. Once we have established a tolerable dose, further patients will be treated in a so-called Phase IIa study. The main purpose of this will be to examine the effects of the treatment. We will be able to treat a maximum of 35 patients,' says Magnus Essand.

The [treatment](#) will be carried out at the teaching hospital Akademiska sjukhuset and will be led by physician Kjell Öberg, professor emeritus of oncological endocrinology at Uppsala University.

Provided by Uppsala University

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