



*World Cancer Research Day
AECC Institutional event 2016
Under the presidency of Her Majesty Queen Letizia*

PRESS RELEASE

Launch of a global movement for cancer research

- ***Most of the international organizations that promote cancer research have joined to support this global initiative: AECC, FC AECC, UICC, IARC, EACR, ESMO, ASCO, KWF, NIH, AIRC and CRUK***
- ***One of the goals of the initiative is to establish September 24th as World Cancer Research Day.***
- ***This initiative has the support of the Spanish Royal Family***

Madrid, September 22nd, 2016. Cancer is an increasingly important health problem in a world in which age expectancy is increasing. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), cancer is projected to become the leading cause of death worldwide, and an increase of 21.6 million new cases per year is foreseen by 2030. The loss of years of life and productivity together with disability from cancer account for the largest economic cost on a global scale, compared to other causes of death including infectious diseases.

Urgent action must be taken to prevent unnecessary deaths and suffering due to cancer and to reduce the great economic burden and social impact of this disease. The Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC) and the Scientific Foundation AECC have launched a global movement to join efforts to promote research in order to improve survival rates and the quality of life of cancer patients. The UICC (Union for International Cancer Control), IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer), EACR (European Association for Cancer Research), ESMO (European Society of Medical Oncology), NIH (National Institutes of Health, USA), CRUK (Cancer Research UK), ASCO (American Society of Clinical Oncology), KWF-DCS (The Dutch Cancer Society) and AIRC (Italian Association for Cancer Research) have endorsed this initiative envisioned in Spain. Moreover, this year the World Cancer Research Day event will be held under the presidency of Her Majesty Queen Letizia of Spain, showing the support of the Spanish Royal Family for the initiative, and with the participation of the co-founder organizations.

A round table to raise awareness of this initiative

This initiative contributes to the goals of the World Cancer Declaration, promoted by the UICC to support research on cancer as well as scientific and social development that will contribute to our ultimate goal: to defeat cancer.

As the round table came to an end, Mr. Ignacio Muñoz, AECC's president, and the President of the Scientific Foundation AECC, Ms. Isabel Oriol, read the World Cancer Declaration for Cancer Research; a declaration that has been endorsed by 28 research centers, hospitals, foundations and Spanish scientific associations together with more than 100 world-recognized cancer researchers. Everyone can join the declaration through the AECC website (www.aecc.es).

The declaration has the following goals:

- Increase social awareness and knowledge of the value and impact of cancer research efforts by establishing September 24th as the World Cancer Research Day.
- Consolidate sustainable funding sources for cancer research in each country by involving individuals, companies and institutions.
- Promote international collaboration by fostering research talent in each country so that they can become part of and contribute to advances in cancer research globally.
- Provide training in cancer research.
- Encourage the development of infrastructures for cancer research in each country.

During the roundtable discussion, moderated by the Spanish journalist Rosa M^a Calaf, the co-founder organizations highlighted the importance of promoting research as a key component in the fight against cancer. This was emphasized by Isabel Mestres, Director of Membership and Business Development at UICC: *“research is fundamental to all areas of cancer control - helping to identify effective, quality and cost effective prevention, screening, treatment and care interventions. This contributes to the better shaping of national cancer policies and in turn, improves the outcomes for cancer patients. WCRD will be a key platform to showcase this and the importance of fostering these capacities in developing countries where the cancer burden is more rapidly increasing and the need is greatest”*.

Moreover, during the discussion, key aspects in the fight against cancer were mentioned. One of these aspects is the need for a tight collaboration between clinicians and researchers.

Another aspect that was brought up during this roundtable session was the need for coordination between countries and research centers. According to Dr. Joan Seoane, Secretary General of the EACR, *“scientists understand the huge importance of multidisciplinary international collaboration. The only way to defeat cancer is to join all the forces from different disciplines and countries to focus our fight on the real enemy. Initiatives such as this round table and the World Cancer Research Day help us to foster collaboration at a national and international level and the EACR is looking forward to working with all the co-founders towards our shared goal”*. Dr. Silvia Franceschi, Special Advisor on Noncommunicable Diseases at IARC stressed *“the importance of improving the availability and dissemination of data on cancer occurrence of and strengthening cancer prevention in every country. Effective tools to avoid many cancers exist and are underused. Others may be found through adequate research efforts”*.

Dr. Roger Glass, Director of the Fogarty Center and Director for International Research NIH remarked the need to promote international cooperation to promote scientific talent. Dr. Glass also received the AECC “V de Vida” award on behalf of Dr. Francis Collins

The Institutional AECC Ceremony took place after the World Cancer Research Day launch event. During this ceremony, the AECC awarded 34 researchers with nearly 8 million euros to support high quality cancer research and to promote scientific careers.

For further information on the World Declaration for Cancer Research, please click on:

www.worldcancerresearchday.com

World Cancer Research Day (WCRD), a tribute to Dr. Severo Ochoa

The 24th of September, World Cancer Research Day, commemorates the birth of Spanish researcher Severo Ochoa. Born on September 24th, 1905, in Lueca, Asturias, Severo Ochoa was a leader and promoter of modern molecular biology with his findings on cellular metabolism and the genetic code.

During the molecular biology revolution, Dr. Ochoa became interested in the genetic code. In 1953 with the discovery of the structure of the DNA by Dr. James Watson and Dr. Francis Crick new questions arose in order to understand its function. Dr. Ochoa addressed the identification of the mechanism that allowed the translation of a 4 letter-based language characteristic of DNA and RNA to a 20 word vocabulary of the amino acid, which are the units responsible to form the proteins.

In 1959 Dr. Severo Ochoa was awarded with the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, shared with his disciple Dr. Arthur Kornberg, for his findings on the biological synthesis mechanisms of the ribonucleic acid (RNA) and deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). Their discoveries led to deciphering the genetic code and the replicative ability of the nucleic acids, the molecules responsible for the hereditary information.

The results obtained by Dr. Severo Ochoa have set the grounds for major improvements in molecular biology and genetic code research that have helped to develop tools and key knowledge to deciphering the cancer.

List of promoting entities

- Spanish Association Against Cancer (AECC)
- AECC's Scientific Foundation
- American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
- Cancer Research UK (CRUK)
- European Association for Cancer Research (EACR)
- European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)
- International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)
- Dutch Cancer Society (DCS)(KWC)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Union for International Cancer Control (UICC)

AECC is a private NPO (nonprofit organization) of public interest that has been working against Cancer for the last 63 years. The AECC is integrated by patients, families, volunteers and professionals who work together to prevent, raise awareness, accompany cancer patients and their families and fund cancer research projects that will enable better diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Offering high quality studies is a priority for AECC. With an amount of 35 million euros, the AECC is nowadays the private organization with the highest cancer research investment.

AECC, gathers the social demand on research against cancer through its Scientific Foundation,; financing social and scientific research programs by public calls. Those programs are focused on funding scientific research with the aim of improving the future of from the cancer patients and their families; strengthening scientific research in Spain and sharing all the achievements. Scientific Foundation AECC has AENOR Quality certification.

Formed by 52 regional delegations and representations in more than 2.000 Spanish cities. AECC carries out its activities with the help of more than 20,298 volunteers and 700 employees united by a philosophy of collaboration with Health authorities, scientific institutions and other organizations with common vision. The AECC core values are: independence, professionalism, transparency and closeness. AECC is an NGO certified by the foundation Fundación Lealtad.

AECC attended more than 447,374 persons affected by the disease in 2015.

If you wish to read more about AECC, please click [here](#).

More information at:

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