A Boost to Translational and Clinical Research in Singapore

STaR Awards to Three Renowned Clinician Scientists

Three renowned clinician scientists – Professor Teh Bin Tean, Professor H. Phillip Koeffler and Professor David Bruce Matchar – received the prestigious Singapore Translational Research (STaR) Investigator Awards to conduct research in Singapore. The award, jointly offered by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), provides research and salary funding to the researchers over a period of five years.

Professor Teh Bin Tean, currently the head of the Laboratories of Cancer Genetics and Sequencing at the Van Andel Research Institute (VARI), established the NCCS-VARI Translational Research Program at the National Cancer Centre Singapore (NCCS) in 2007. Professor Teh is one of the world’s leading kidney cancer research scientists and a pioneer in molecular profiling of kidney cancer.

Professor Teh will be helping to establish a hereditary cancer clinic and a molecular diagnostics laboratory at NCCS. With the identification of the genes responsible for all major hereditary cancer syndromes and the increasing awareness of local physicians and patients concerning the hereditary nature of cancers, there is a strong need for such a clinic in the region. In research, Professor Teh will focus on cancer drug resistance studies, assist in other ongoing translational research programs such as the one on pancreaticobiliary cancer.

Professor H. Phillip Koeffler, deputy director (research) at National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS), was the director of the Division of Hematology/Oncology at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and holder of the Mark Goodson Chair in Oncology Research at Cedars-Sinai before he came to Singapore.

Professor Koeffler aims to foster the development of cancer research and education for young investigators in Singapore. His research endeavors to identify unique genomic abnormalities of selected Asian cancers, and to explore the biologic and clinical significance of PAX5 deletions, mutations and fusion products in acute leukemia.

Professor David Matchar, the inaugural director and professor of the Programme in Health Services and Systems Research, at the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School, was a professor in the department of internal medicine at Duke University Medical Center before he embarked his career in Singapore in 2008. His research relates to clinical practice improvement – from the development of clinical policies to their implementation in real world clinical settings. His major content focus has been on cerebrovascular disease and other disabling neurological conditions. His work bridges biomedical research and technical analysis, including simulation modeling, to inform public policy and clinical practice in Singapore, and in doing so provide models for health care systems in other countries.

Professor Teh Bin Tean

Professor H. Phillip Koeffler

Professor David Bruce Matchar