Dear Friend,

I have spent the last two days in a meeting on biomarkers, and was part of a panel on the role of nonprofits in biomarker development. About half of cutaneous melanomas have a mutation in a gene called BRAF. This is a biomarker that is required to receive drugs that target that specific mutation. If you have the BRAF mutation you are eligible for the drug; if not, you aren’t.

Not all biomarkers are that simple and many questions remain. What if we had a test that could tell us which patients are 80% likely to respond to a drug, and which are only 20% likely to respond? Would that influence who receives the drug? What if the likelihood was 10%? 5%? Does the cost of the drug factor into the decision? The number of side effects?

We are getting closer to a time when we can be confident that we are giving the right drug to the right person. As we progress toward this, questions must be addressed. We are convinced the answers will be informed by the perspective of patients, as well as industry and government regulators.

We want to hear from you - should the MRF do more in this area? Should we host a Twitter chat to discuss? Should we have a webinar? A survey? Send your thoughts to info@melanoma.org. The conversation is already happening - let’s be sure that the patient voice is heard.

Sincerely,

Timothy Turnham
Executive Director

Recap: Eyes on a Cure Symposium

Over 100 people attended the 4th annual Eyes on a Cure ocular melanoma (OM) patient and caregiver meeting on
March 6-8 at Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) in Philadelphia. In addition to important clinical topics, this conference included sessions highlighting both CURE OM-funded research and other cutting-edge research from around the world.

Speakers covering topics such as current therapies, clinical trials, and the latest research in the OM field included Dr. Carol Shields from Will Eye Institute, Dr. Takami Sato from Thomas Jefferson University, Dr. Lynn Schuchter from the University of Pennsylvania, and CURE OM-funded researcher Dr. Richard Carvajal from Columbia University. Attendees learned up-to-date information about liver treatments for metastatic disease from TJU Drs. David Eschelman, Carin Gonsalves, and Rani Anne. Dr. Jason Luke from the University of Chicago shared cutting-edge updates from two important scientific meetings this past year—the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the Society of Melanoma Research (SMR).

In addition to the foundation of scientific and research-focused discussions, TJU social workers led small group break-out sessions to offer a foundation of psychosocial support for participants.

Presentations from the meeting can be viewed here.

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**Miles for Melanoma 2015**

Do you want to have fun while raising money and awareness for melanoma? If so, the MRF’s Miles for Melanoma 5k Run/Walk program is looking for people like you! Spend one morning, typically on a weekend, with several hundred other supporters running or walking 3.1 inspirational miles to further the battle against this deadly disease. Miles for Melanoma events are often produced by local volunteers and feature free skin screenings, making them a great way to meet other people who are committed to the fight.

This year, the MRF will be hosting close to **30** Miles for Melanoma 5k run/walks all across the country! Bookmark this page to make sure you know when there’s one in your area.

By participating in a Miles for Melanoma event, you can make a powerful impact and help people with melanoma live longer, better lives. Register for a Miles for Melanoma 5k near you today!

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**Melanoma in the News**

Below is a sampling of recent melanoma and indoor tanning news.

“**Merck says melanoma drug meets goal; study halted.**” KFGO.com

“**Study: Gay men tan more and get more skin cancer.**” USA Today

“**Idaho bill requiring parental permission for teen tanning passes Senate.**” CBS Seattle
“Immunotherapy promising for advanced melanoma.” Dermatology Times

“Isn’t it time to put pre-prom tanning to bed?” Huffington Post

“Salon owners say proposed tanning ban would hurt business.” ABC 9 WMUR News

“New Hampshire House to vote on tanning ban for teenagers.” NBC 7 WHDH News

“CURE OM encourages ocular melanoma patients to share stories.” Melanoma News Today

“Melanoma survivor urges lawmakers to ban minors from tanning beds.” Tucson Sentinel

“Iowa one step closer to banning tanning for teens.” The Des Moines Register

“They came for a 'Free Killer Tan' but ended up at their own funerals.” Today Health

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