

DIABETES AND CANCER RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

Consortium Statement

A number of issues relating to diabetes and cancer have recently become the focus of considerable interest and controversy, and form the basis for a recent call for research applications from the EASD/EFSD. Three questions appear central to this debate:

1. What is the mechanistic basis for the epidemiological association between diabetes and cancer?
2. Does choice of therapy for diabetes influence cancer risk? If so, how and why?
3. Why does cancer have a worse prognosis in people with diabetes, and could this be overcome?

Although some pointers can be derived from controlled clinical trials, much research in this area will inevitably take the form of descriptive studies. The limitations of this approach are well established, but descriptive studies have an essential role in hypothesis generation, and may potentially form the basis for future clinical trials.

We believe that collaboration is a key element of future work in this area, and that this should bring together those with expertise in basic science, oncology, diabetes therapy, epidemiology, and statistical modelling. Oversight of this activity would be entrusted to a Steering Committee, whose membership would be drawn from non-participants in the study groups.

A central aim of such a consortium would be to optimise methodology for descriptive studies, to develop joint work-programmes, and (where possible) to analyse data derived from different databases in parallel.

Participants in the consortium are invited to exchange and discuss protocols, and to meet in regular workshop groups to discuss methodology and share analysis of their research findings. Although the EASD initiative would form the focus for such an interaction, participation in the collaboration would potentially be open to other groups with shared interests and activities. A key criterion for participation in the consortium is the contribution and sharing of novel data and/or methodologies to address the central questions outlined above.

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