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A Glimmer of Hope Foundation Supports AHN Cancer Institute Study to Drive Innovative Approaches for Treating Patients with Metastatic Breast Cancer

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Grant Supports AHN Cancer Institute Research Pilot Study to Understand the Immune Response in MBRCA Patients

PITTSBURGH -- [Allegheny Health Network \(AHN\) Cancer Institute](#) is working to understand the contributing factors of pleural and peritoneal immunity on the spread of metastatic breast cancer.

By means of a recent grant awarded to AHN by A Glimmer of Hope Foundation, AHN is hoping to deliver better outcomes and less toxic therapeutic options for patients living with metastatic breast cancer.

The pleural and peritoneal cavities play a critical role in the function of organs that are located within them. Unfortunately, in cancer patients these cavities are often invaded by malignant cells, leading to life-threatening problems such as malignant pleural effusions (MPE) and malignant peritoneal ascites (MPA), which are quite often the cause of death affecting patients with

metastatic cancer and are more difficult to treat than primary tumors.

“We are working toward a new approach to deliver immunostimulating drugs directly into the site of the cavity containing malignant fluid, to activate the patient’s immune cells,” said Patrick Wagner, MD, Director of AHN Cancer Institute Division of Complex General Surgical Oncology. “This grant will enable us to understand the immune response to metastatic breast cancer in ways that we can leverage in future studies to deliver immunotherapy agents directly into the body cavities.”

According to the [American Cancer Society \(ACS\)](#), the 5-year survival rate after diagnosis for people with stage 4 breast cancer is 28 percent. This percentage is considerably lower than earlier stages. Although metastatic breast cancer has no current cure, the right treatment for stage 4 breast cancer can improve quality of life and longevity.

“Metastatic breast cancer is a devastating disease that has affected us personally and is very close to our hearts,” said Diana Napper, Founder of A Glimmer of Hope Foundation. “We at Glimmer of Hope attain a great sense of fulfillment from seeing our contributions at work, and we couldn’t be more pleased to provide AHN Cancer Institute support to evaluate and potentially reduce spread in breast cancer patients.”

“The generous funding received by A Glimmer of Hope is testament to how impactful their partnership with AHN is,” said Allie Quick, Chief Philanthropy Officer at AHN. “The valued support we receive from A Glimmer of Hope Foundation makes it possible for us to touch the lives of patients involved in breast cancer treatments by providing them with hope.”

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