Melanoma Models for the Next Decade of Progress

The Melanoma Research Alliance presents a Perspective in Cancer Cell, which identifies challenges in melanoma research and drug discovery

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Despite the tremendous progress that's been made over the past decade for patients with melanoma, nearly half of patients do not benefit from currently approved therapies. Developing novel therapies for these individuals is a daunting challenge that begins with laboratory studies and hopefully ends with a drug candidate that is then extensively tested through a well-controlled Phase 3 clinical trial. In between, there is a myriad of steps, some of which critically depend on melanoma models.

To better understand how melanoma models can contribute to the next generation of melanoma therapies, MRA convened a half-day workshop at the 2020 Scientific Retreat. The workshop, which was co-chaired by Liz Patton of University of Edinburgh and Glenn Merlino of NCI/NIH, included presentations by leading experts in melanoma models, and roundtable discussions on unanswered questions in the field.

MRA is delighted to report that an outcome of the workshop – a Perspective in Cancer Cell authored by the workshop participants – was recently published. In the Perspective, the authors identify five major challenges in melanoma research and drug discovery that can be addressed using models. These include metastasis and tumor dormancy, drug resistance, the melanoma immune response, the impact of aging and environmental exposures on melanoma progression and drug resistance, and finally rare melanoma subtypes. The Perspective also highlights key recommendations for melanoma models to improve their accuracy in predicting efficacy of drug candidates in clinical trials.

The Perspective can be accessed here.

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