



CARPEM Scientific Advisory Board

Report of July 6th, 2013

Presents at the Scientific Advisory Board :

Glenn Dranoff, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA

Michael Karin, School of Medicine, University of California, San Diego, CA, USA

Peter Krammer, German Cancer Research Cancer (DKFZ), Heidelberg, Germany

Alain Puisieux, Centre de lutte contre le cancer Léon Bérard, Lyon, France

Arnaud Roth, Geneva University Hospital, Switzerland

Robert Schreiber, Washington University School of Medicine, St Louis, MO, USA

Dan Theodorescu, University of Colorado Cancer center, Denver, CO, USA

Report:

After a short discussion with Pierre Laurent-Puig (Director of the CARPEM) and Wolf-Hervé Fridman (Deputy Director) concerning the remit of the SAB, Pierre-Laurent-Puig presented a synopsis overview of CARPEM, which brought about the opportunity to openly discuss the goals and the organization of this new entity. This was followed by presentations by the respective leaders of the Data Warehouse project and the three integrated research programs of CARPEM: “Genomics – Tumor microenvironment – Innovative therapeutics”. The program “Ethics and cancer” was not presented during this 1st meeting of the SAB.

Overall, the SAB was highly appreciative of the effort made by the members of CARPEM to facilitate their visit and provide the SAB with the appropriate documentation. The SAB members were impressed by the overall quality of the science presented by the program leaders in the oral presentation sessions. This reflected the excellence of the research teams, most of them being headed by internationally recognized leaders. Of utmost importance, the two main axes of CARPEM, Cancer Genomics and Immuno-Oncology, both rely on outstanding groups, giving a strong rationale to the overall program and to its ultimate goal: facilitate the transfer of knowledge into an improved cancer patient management through the development of personalized medicine. In this perspective, the CARPEM perfectly meets the general policy of Integrated Cancer Research Sites, as defined by the French National Cancer Institute. On the basis of the strengths of the academic teams and the expertise of clinical

institutions involved in CARPEM, the SAB members have a very favourable perception of the general design of the program and look forward to its full implementation.

Nevertheless, beyond the recognition of the existing strengths of the participating teams, the SAB members raised a few questions concerning the expected added value of the SIRIC and the strategy of CARPEM to reinforce the involvement of clinical teams, strengthen the interactions between the implicated research teams, and to catalyse their synergy. As presented, and probably because it has just been created, the CARPEM appears mainly as a compilation of excellent individual research projects that however lacks significant formalized interactions and collaborations, common programs, shared facilities and joint services. The SAB would like to see, as the CARPEM matures, more significant attempts to integrate the fundamental goals that underlie SIRIC centers :

- Provide added value of the partner institutions and centers in advancing cancer research.
- Enhance the quality of the science, the productivity of scientists and promote trans-disciplinary activities.
- Accelerate dissemination of basic knowledge to health care professionals and eventually patients.

To help CARPEM accomplish these goals, the SAB members have the following recommendations:

- Establish a common tumor bank integrating a central information system allowing interoperability of the 3 current biobanks. Make this tumor bank available to all CARPEM members and managed by a joint committee of CARPEM investigators.
- Development of the translational research platform (transSMART), initially installed at HEGP, across all institutions, and the creation of a biostatistical unit involving all the biostatistic personal disseminated throughout the CARPEM institutions and units in order to obtain the critical mass needed to ensure the competitiveness of the analysis performed in a field in constant evolution.
- In addition to this biostatistical unit, there is the need for the development/acquisition of a computerized clinical trial management system (CTMS) to efficiently and effectively manage the clinical trials across the clinical institutions as well as coordinate the tissue banking.
- Aggressive use of funds for “Emergence”/Pilot research programs is strongly supported as a powerful tool to initiate cross-research interdisciplinary projects. However, the SAB emphasises the need to clearly define the rules and criteria of selection of the funded projects and the “deliverables” or “success metrics” that these projects should accomplish.
- A clear prioritization of scientific programs, including the tumor types to be studied. Eight different tumor types are mentioned in the current program on the basis of existing biological and/or clinical expertise. The SAB recommends a higher degree of focus allowing the establishment of transversal programs involving the different fields of research of CARPEM (genomics and onco-immunology). Such an effort appears to be initiated in the model of colorectal cancers. Considering the outstanding quality of genomics studies performed within the CARPEM, hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) should be considered as another priority in this perspective. More specifically, the SAB recommends the initiation of studies on the immuno-profile of HCC and its response to immune modulation. The development/acquisition of a computerized

clinical trial management system (CTMS) to efficiently and effectively manage the clinical trials across the clinical institutions as well as coordinate the tissue banking.

- The SAB recommends reconvening in one year to monitor further development of the organizational plan and progress made towards achieving its goals.
- Defining a common strategy that governs the research and clinical approaches of CARPEM (such as development of common technological platforms and joint services) based on existing expertise and common needs is strongly recommended.
- Establishment of clear targets and milestones in order to guide and monitor progress of the overall program as well as for each focus/priority area as defined above.
- Try to leverage the scientific excellence and interactions within CARPEM to apply for additional financial support from European source such as ERC.
- Organization of common seminars and meetings that would include speakers from other Parisian and national SIRIC funded centers as well as international speakers.
- Organization of an annual retreat gathering the main scientific and clinical partners of the CARPEM.