

Truckee hospital part of lung cancer trial

By Sammy Caiola, Sacramento Bee

A national lung cancer trial launched earlier this summer with the help of a UC Davis oncologist has the potential to dramatically affect the way cancer drugs will be developed in the future.

The trial, called Lung-MAP, puts a cancer-fighting approach into action that uses genomic profiling. This involves testing a patient's tumors for "bio markers," or genetic identifiers, that can help physicians determine which genetically targeted drugs will work for them.

The current course of treatment for lung cancer presents patients a range of therapies, some toxic, that are not targeted for that individual's cancer. Elizabeth Lacasia, a stage 4 lung cancer patient and active support group participant at the Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation in the Bay Area, called it "throwing spaghetti on the wall to see if something sticks."

The launch is a collaboration between the National Cancer Institute, the Southwest Oncology Group, Friends of Cancer Research, the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health and five pharmaceutical companies. As part of the newly formed National Clinical Trials Network, or NCTN, the study will have access to more than 400 trial sites nationwide, 200 of which have already launched. The rest will join in the coming months.

Sites at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center in Truckee and the Rideout Cancer Center in Marysville also have been activated, along with the UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center.

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