

BCNI Principal Investigator Profile

Name: Professor Michael O'Dwyer

Current position: Professor of Haematology, Consultant Haematologist and HRB Clinician Scientist, NUI Galway

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Role in BCNI : Director



Background career information: Michael graduated 1st in his class from NUI Galway in 1990 and carried out specialist training in Haematology from 1991-1998. He then moved to Portland Oregon, USA, initially as a Haematology Fellow and then as Assistant Professor in the Division of Haematology and Oncology. In 2002 he was appointed Consultant Haematologist at University Hospital Galway and in 2007 he became Professor of Haematology at the NUI Galway School of Medicine. In 2012 Michael received a Clinician Scientist Award worth €1.7m from the Health Research Board to establish a translational research programme in multiple myeloma at NUI Galway.

Research and Clinical Interests: Michael is a Clinician Scientist with a special interest in translational research in blood cancers, in particular multiple myeloma and leukaemia. An important aspect of his approach is collaboration with basic researchers in the biomedical sciences to help translate advances in the laboratory to the bedside. His translational projects have included investigating the potential role of Cdc7 inhibition in chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) and myeloma and the use of BH3 mimetics and TRAIL as apoptosis inducing agents in leukaemia. Currently his research is focussed on investigating the role of glycosylation in the pathogenesis of multiple myeloma and in identifying new biomarkers and developing novel therapeutic strategies. This work has recently been published in the journal "Blood" where it implicated interactions between selectins and their ligands in disease progression and resistance in myeloma. Michael's considerable clinical trial experience is a key factor facilitating successful clinical translation of basic research findings.

His other major focus is developing innovative phase I and II studies through the Health Research Board Clinical Research Facility and the Myeloma Ireland Consortium. He is also currently Chair of the Haematology and Lymphoma Disease specific sub group with ICORG (All Ireland Cooperative Oncology Research Group) and has been the key driver in establishing the "Blood Cancer Network Ireland" because he wants Irish patients to have access to the latest drugs being developed for blood cancers by setting up a national infrastructure for early phase clinical trials in blood cancers.