



Working Groups: Identifying Research Priorities

CCF's 12th Annual Conference will focus on identifying the top research priorities to accelerate breakthroughs in cholangiocarcinoma research. This initiative is a joint effort between CCF's International Cholangiocarcinoma Research Network (ICRN) and the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST)-Action: Precision-BTC-Network, part of the European Network for the Study of Cholangiocarcinoma (ENSCCA).

As a rare cancer with limited global research funding, a clear set of research priorities will help optimize the allocation of existing research funds and attract additional funding from diverse sources.

Patients and caregivers will actively participate side-by-side with experts in the field, attending sessions and voting on research priorities.

The Design: Working Groups

The initiative will be organized into ten specialized working groups, each addressing an aspect of cholangiocarcinoma and comprised of experts, a patient research advocate, and an early-career researcher. The groups will have 8-10 members, aiming for a balance of geography, gender, and expertise. Two leaders representing ICRN and Precision-BTC-Network will co-chair each group. They will organize and lead group discussions and reviews and collaborate with Conference Leadership to ensure project success.

- 1. Diagnostics / Interventional:** Research focused on developing and improving diagnostic techniques (for example, earlier and more accurate detection of cholangiocarcinoma) and interventional procedures for patients after diagnosis.
- 2. Surgery:** Investigations aimed at advancing surgical assessment, techniques, outcomes, and/or recovery for patients undergoing procedures to treat cholangiocarcinoma.
- 3. Industry & Regulatory:** Identifying research questions that apply to developing new treatments (for example, design of clinical trials, endpoints, regulatory approval), and fostering industry collaborations to accelerate the development and approval of new cholangiocarcinoma treatments.
- 4. Science (Discovery):** Basic science research to uncover new molecular and genetic mechanisms underlying cholangiocarcinoma.
- 5. Science (Translational):** Translational research that bridges the gap between laboratory discoveries and clinical applications to improve patient outcomes.
- 6. Patients/Advocates & Supportive Care:** Identifying research gaps focused on enhancing patient support, advocacy, and overall quality of life for those affected by cholangiocarcinoma.
- 7. Locoregional and Radiation:** Studies exploring the efficacy and safety of locoregional therapies and radiation treatments for managing cholangiocarcinoma.
- 8. Pathology:** Research aimed at improving the pathological understanding and classification of cholangiocarcinoma to inform better diagnostic and therapeutic strategies.
- 9. Biomarkers and Early Detection:** Efforts to identify and validate biomarkers that can be used for the early detection and monitoring of cholangiocarcinoma.
- 10. Systemic Therapies:** Research focused on developing and optimizing systemic therapies for cholangiocarcinoma, including chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and targeted treatments.

Evaluation: Reaching a Consensus

Before the Conference, each Working Group will evaluate the previously published research, studies, and reviews and recommend three to four key priorities requiring research funding. At the Conference, the Working Groups will present to attendees, and their recommendations will be open for discussion and voting by all attendees, with adjustments until a consensus or full agreement is reached.

Final Steps: Publication and Funding

Following the Conference, a manuscript will be developed for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, demonstrating the research's quality, impact, and feasibility, significantly increasing new funding opportunities.