



Leaders' Update

A message from Deputy Director Steven Grossman

Dear colleagues,

Some of the most successful advances in cancer research have come about through collaborations that cross academic disciplines. For this reason, a major emphasis for Massey Cancer Center is to develop and sustain a collaborative environment for our researchers. One of the mechanisms through which Massey fosters interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary interactions is by bringing diverse researchers together to talk about their science and form new collaborations through a variety of focus groups aligned by specific diseases and themes of scientific interest.

In addition to providing an opportunity for collaboration, these focus groups also provide guidance to investigators as they move their basic science through translation into therapeutic and prevention trials. Massey has several cross-cutting thematic focus groups and disease-specific focus groups that bring together researchers from basic science, clinical and cancer prevention and control research to collaborate around a common interest or cancer type.

The Immunology and Immunotherapy Focus Group led by Masoud Manjili meets monthly on the fourth Thursday. The Obesity, Metabolism, Inflammation and Cancer Focus Group led by me meets on the third Friday of each month. There is also the p53 Working Group led by Sumitra Deb that meets monthly on the third Thursday; the Palliative Care Research Interest Group led by Brian Cassel that meets on the third Thursday of the month; and the Cachexia Interest Group co-led by David Gewirtz and Egidio Del Fabbro that also meets on the third Thursday of the month.

The disease-based focus groups include the Breast Cancer Research Interest Group led by Harry Bear that meets monthly on the fourth Tuesday; a neuro-oncology group led by Mark Malkin that meets quarterly; and the GI Oncology Research Group that I lead that meets on the last Thursday of each month. A developing group on lung cancer led by Sumitra Deb meets on the first Wednesday of every month, and the hematologic malignancy group is working to meet more regularly. Our future plans are to eventually start a group for prostate cancer.

Meeting details for these groups, including times and locations, are available on the Massey website at: [HYPERLINK "http://www.massey.vcu.edu/research/research-events-calendar/"](http://www.massey.vcu.edu/research/research-events-calendar/) <http://www.massey.vcu.edu/research/research-events-calendar/>. Please join any of these groups if you are interested. If you would like to learn more about these groups or have ideas for new groups, please email me. I welcome any suggestions.

Finally, I would like to encourage all of Massey's research members and your research teams to attend the 2017 Massey Cancer Research Retreat on Friday, June 16 at 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The keynote speakers are Jeffrey Engelman, M.D., Ph.D., from Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, who will present on lung cancer therapeutics, and Robert Schnoll, Ph.D., from the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, who will present on improving use and treatments for nicotine dependence. The retreat will also feature presentations of new research from each of Massey's research programs. Presentations will take place in the Molecular Medicine Research Building rooms 1009/1011, with a poster session in the McGlothlin Medical Education Center on floors 11 and 12. Please consider submitting your ongoing research for presentation at the poster session – the deadline for abstract submission is May 26. This activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit. We hope that you can join us at the retreat.

Regards,

Steven R. Grossman, M.D., Ph.D.
Deputy director