The Paul Carbone, MD Fellowship Award was presented to Patrick Forde, MD, at the ECOG-ACRIN Spring 2013 Group Meeting earlier this month in Atlanta, GA. Dr. Forde is a medical oncology fellow at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in Baltimore, MD.

Since 2004, the ECOG Research and Education Foundation has provided recognition and financial support to outstanding senior hematology or oncology fellows through this award, the purpose of which is to develop and promote excellence in clinical trials, leading to improvements in cancer care. To be eligible, a physician must have completed a 2-year fellowship in oncology at an ECOG-ACRIN member institution before receiving the award, be actively involved in cancer clinical trials, and not yet have received a first full-time faculty appointment.

**Award Will Further the Investigation of Nivolumab**

The $25,000 stipend associated with the award will provide salary support for Dr. Forde during the third and fourth years of his fellowship at JHU, during which time, he will pursue his investigator-initiated clinical trial entitled “Safety and Immune Correlates of Preoperative Single-agent Anti-PD-1 Antibody Nivolumab in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer.” This single-arm study will assess the safety of the preoperative use of nivolumab in patients with resectable stage II/IIIA non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). Immune factors in blood and tumor will also be evaluated for candidate biomarkers of immune activation as secondary and exploratory endpoints.

Results of immune correlates will be compared with samples from patients proceeding directly to standard-of-care surgical resection of NSCLC. The incorporation of laboratory correlates in this protocol builds upon the translational research expertise of the Lung Cancer and Immunology Program at JHU, a program supported by a National Institutes of Health-funded Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) grant and other peer-reviewed grants. Because the JHU Lung Cancer SPORE is closely associated with the Thoracic Committee of the ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group, Dr. Forde will continue to receive mentorship in the area of biomarker development from committee members throughout his fellowship.

The clinical trial costs of Dr. Forde’s study will be funded as a central component of the Stand Up To Cancer Immunotherapy grant that was awarded to JHU.

**Group Mentorship Extends from Ireland to the US**

Dr. Forde was born in Ireland and received his medical oncology training at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland in Dublin. His work with ECOG-ACRIN extends back to the years 2007-2011, during which time he served with the Irish Collaborative Oncology Research Group (ICORG) as a co-investigator for several ECOG studies.

ICORG has been a member of ECOG since 2006, and its current Principal Investigator to ECOG-ACRIN is Ray McDermott, MD.

Dr. Forde will conduct the above-mentioned NSCLC study with the continued mentorship of Julie R. Brahmer, MD, Associate Professor of Oncology at The Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at JHU and a senior member of the ECOG-ACRIN Thoracic Committee. His fellowship committee at JHU includes several highly experienced clinical and translational researchers who are associated with ECOG-ACRIN, including Charles Rudin, MD, PhD; Michael Carducci, MD, FACP; and Elizabeth Jaffee, MD, PhD.

JHU has been a member of ECOG since 1970, and its current Principal Investigator to ECOG-ACRIN is Arlene A. Forastiere, MD.

**Reflections**

Dr. Forde wishes to thank his colleagues at ICORG and JHU for the outstanding research training he has received and hopes to build on this experience using the excellent opportunities afforded him through the ECOG Foundation Paul Carbone, MD Fellowship Award.