



Press Release

Strasbourg, December 13th, 2021

THE DELIVER PROGRAM FOR LIVER DISEASE THERAPEUTIC INNOVATION IS LAUREATE OF THE 5TH CALL FOR UNIVERSITY-HOSPITAL RESEARCH PROJECTS IN HEALTH (RHU)

The DELIVER project led by Prof. Thomas BAUMERT is among the 17 winners - out of a total 89 candidates - of the 5th call for University-Hospital Research projects in Health (RHU). As an important component of the Investment for the Future Program, the RHU call for proposals aims to support large-scale, innovative, translational research projects bringing together academic, hospital, and industrial players. Granted with €6.7M, DELIVER focuses on therapeutic innovation for advanced liver diseases and cancer, and it is the sole winner in the Grand Est Region of France.

The ambition of DELIVER is to transform the care for patients suffering from advanced liver disease and cancer, by providing a novel therapeutic approach and non-invasive biomarkers to identify patients at risk of liver disease progression to cancer. To tackle this major challenge, world-class multidisciplinary teams from public and private sectors joined their forces: experts in translational liver disease research from **Inserm**, **University of Strasbourg**, **IHU Strasbourg**, **Strasbourg University Hospitals**, **AP-HP Bobigny** and **University Sorbonne Paris Nord**, will work together with the French-Swiss clinical stage rising star biotech **Alentis**, and the medical imaging leader **Guerbet**. DELIVER is the result of a long-lasting synergy in translational research and tech-transfer among three entities within the French "Investment for the Future" Program (LabEx HepSYS, IHU Strasbourg and SATT Conectus).

Advanced liver fibrosis and cancer, such as hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), are particularly difficult to treat. For liver fibrosis there are no approved therapies. HCC is a leading cause of cancer-related death, with close to a million deaths worldwide in the year 2020. What is more alarming, is the increasing incidence of advanced liver fibrosis and HCC due to fatty liver disease, which is mainly related to poor diet, sedentary lifestyle, and a growing aging population.

Collectively, DELIVER provides a cutting-edge program to transform the care of patients affected by advanced liver disease and cancer by delivering innovative solutions on multiple fronts. This multidisciplinary project integrates: the clinical evaluation of an innovative biotherapy discovered by Prof. Baumert's team and developed by Alentis, the development of novel models to discover candidate combination therapies, and the characterization of circulating and imaging biomarkers to enable precision medicine of advanced liver diseases and cancer.

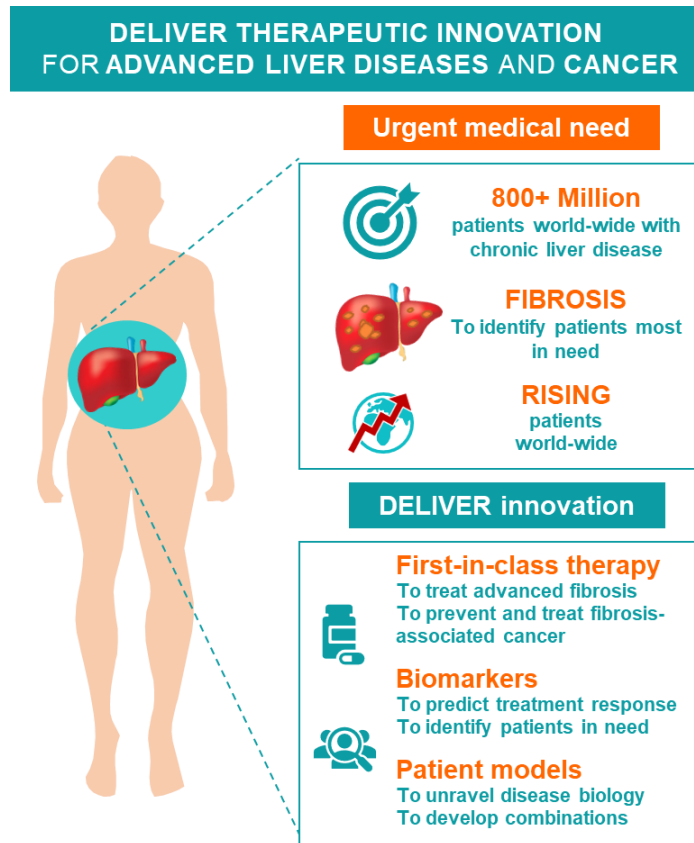
The target of DELIVER is highly innovative and relevant for both fibrosis and cancer. The program is based on a unique concept that improves not only fibrosis but also acts on tumorigenic pathways. Robust proof-of-concept was established across the most advanced patient-derived models.

The DELIVER approach is unique by combining cutting-edge patient-derived models, artificial intelligence and imaging for drug and biomarker development. Harnessing our long-standing collaborations, expertise, and the most advanced cutting-edge technologies, the program will combine patient-derived models, and integrate the latest imaging technologies with AI and large prospective cohorts of patients included in HCC surveillance programs, to deliver therapeutic innovation for advanced liver fibrosis and HCC.

Prof. Thomas Baumert explains: « *Our consortium is grateful for the support of the ANR and French Government, which will enable to significantly improve the outcome of patients' lives with advanced liver disease and cancer. This program will create a new hub of excellence for therapeutic innovation at the University of Strasbourg* ».

Link: [here](#)

Graphical abstract:



DELIVER: a cutting-edge public-private R&D program designed to deliver urgently needed therapeutics, biomarkers and novel patient-derived models for advanced liver fibrosis and cancer. Credits © DELIVER consortium

Scientific Contact:

Prof. Thomas F. Baumert: +33 (0)3 68 85 37 03 / thomas.baumert@unistra.fr

Press Contacts:

University of Strasbourg: Alexandre Tatay / +33 (0) 6 80 52 01 82 / tatay@unistra.fr

Inserm: Emilie Denat-Turgis / +33 (0) 3 88 10 86 47 / emilie.denat-turgis@inserm.fr

Strasbourg University Hospitals: H el ene Braeuner / +33 (0)3 88 11 64 12 / presse@chru-strasbourg.fr