

## **Professor Maeve Lowery recipient of award from Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund (UK)**

Professor Maeve Lowery, Trinity's recently appointed Professor of Translational Cancer Medicine, is the recipient of a recent award from the [Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund \(UK\)](#) which will fund her research over the coming three years into the treatment of patients with pancreatic cancer.

Pancreatic cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer death in Ireland and worldwide. It is expected to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common cause of cancer death in the US within the next two years, reflecting a rising incidence of the disease and lack of effective treatment options. In contrast to other cancers, new cancer drugs including targeted therapies and immunotherapies have not improved survival rates for patients with pancreatic cancer.

Professor Lowery will analyse pancreatic tumours to identify mutations in both the coding and non-coding 'regulatory' regions of genes involved in repairing DNA within the cell, and study how these mutations effect how a pancreatic cancer cell grows and how it responds to treatment with drugs in the laboratory.

She hopes that the results of these studies will be used to design a clinical trial for patients with pancreatic cancer; where patients are selected for targeted treatment based on genetic testing that indicates they have similar mutations in their DNA damage repair genes.

*"This research will help us to understand how genetic changes within a pancreatic tumour can predict which drugs will be most effective for that patient."*

The award from the PCRf is important as it will facilitate researchers from complimentary backgrounds working together to improve outcomes for patients with pancreatic cancer. As an oncologist who treats patients with pancreatic cancer and works both on clinical trials and in the laboratory, Professor Lowery will work with her colleagues Professor Adrian Bracken of the Smurfit Institute of Genetics at Trinity and Dr Alex Eustace, translational oncology scientist at the National Institute for Cellular Biotechnology at Dublin City University.