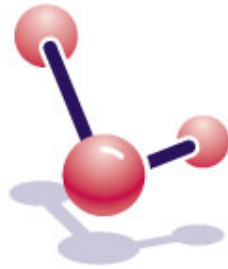


MCT Immunology Team secure funding to advance Target Identification in Lupus



Alliance *for* Lupus Research

PREVENT. TREAT. CURE.

The Alliance for Lupus Research (ALR) is a US voluntary health organisation which has become the world's largest private source of research funds for discovery programs advancing our understanding of this devastating autoimmune disease Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) or Lupus. Under their highly competitive Target Identification in Lupus (TIL) grant program, the most promising investigators from around the world leverage a two-year, \$400,000 award to remove the barriers to new treatments and work towards a possible cure. Dr. Caroline Jefferies, Molecular and Cellular Therapeutics, is a recent TIL awardee. Dr. Jefferies' team have identified novel drugable targets that regulate the immune response and thus might be important targets in Lupus. Proteins called Interferons, released by the immune system during viral infection, are highly elevated in SLE patients and play an important role in activating the immune system to produce autoantibodies that drive the pathology of this disease. Therefore strategies to reduce the levels of these proteins are predicted to alleviate SLE symptoms and progression and restore the immune system to its normal state. Dr. Jefferies' lab has focussed on identifying novel strategies for preventing the production of Interferons. In doing, so they have identified 2 novel regulators of anti-viral responses whose activation results in the reduction of antiviral Interferons. These regulators, termed Ro52 and Siglec-E, can be activated using novel strategies, and the aim of this project, funded by ALR, is to investigate the effect of activating these proteins in reducing the symptoms and severity in SLE. It is hoped that this work will ultimately lead to the development of treatments targeting Ro52 and Siglec-E for the management of SLE.