

Healthcare industry BW

German Cancer Award for Michael Baumann

Michael Baumann, Chairman and Scientific Director of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) in Heidelberg, receives the 2017 German Cancer Award in the category "Translational Research". The science award, which is sponsored by the German Cancer Society and the German Cancer Foundation, is one of the most prestigious distinctions in cancer medicine in Germany.



Michael Baumann, Chairman and Scientific Director of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) in Heidelberg, receives the 2017 German Cancer Award in the category "Translational Research".

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Established in 1986, the award is presented annually in equal parts for excellent research in experimental basic research, in translational research and in tumor diagnostics and treatment. Each category includes a monetary prize of €7,500. This year's awards will be presented at the 33rd German Cancer Congress in Berlin on February 22, 2018.

The German Cancer Award distinguishes current and seminal work in oncology which is rated outstanding in originality and quality. Award winner Michael Baumann has combined applied cancer research and clinical oncology in his work for many years.

Baumann is a physician, radiation oncologist and radiation biologist who has treated cancer patients by radiation therapy since 1990. From 2004 until 2016, he established the OncoRay National Center for Radiation Research in Oncology in Dresden and pursued the integration of new biological findings with advanced technologies in radiation therapy.

Since November 2016, Baumann has been Chairman and Scientific Director of the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) in Heidelberg and chairman and spokesperson of the steering committee of the German Cancer Consortium (DKTK). His own research focus is on individualized radiotherapy, where radiation-specific biomarkers are used to adjust radiation treatment to the individual patient.

Using modern image technology, scientists led by Baumann have developed, for example, a method to see the oxygen concentration in tumors of the head and neck. A radioactively labeled molecule accumulates in so-called hypoxic tumor areas, where oxygen levels are lower than normal. A PET camera captures images of this accumulation of the radioactive marker substance. The oxygen concentration in a tumor during irradiation plays an important role in treatment, because tumors in the head and neck with large oxygen-deprived areas are considerably more resilient to radio-chemotherapy compared to oxygen-rich tumors.

The results may help tailor the current standard therapy for head-and-neck cancer better to the individual patient. Based on the innovative imaging method, physicians are enabled to predict the effectiveness of combined radio-chemotherapy. If the prognosis for the patient is poor, radiotherapy might be intensified to increase the chances of cure.

Michael Baumann earned his degree as a medical doctor from Hamburg University in 1988. He went on to work as a post-doc at Massachusetts General Hospital at Harvard Medical School in Boston, USA, until late 1989. Following his training as a radiation therapy specialist, he attained his qualification to give lectures ('Habilitation') in Hamburg in 1994. In 1995, he joined the Medical Faculty Carl Gustav Carus in Dresden as head of Experimental Radiotherapy. In 2003, he became a founding director of the University Cancer Center Dresden (UCC). From 2010 until 2016, he worked as the director of Radiotherapy and Radiation Oncology at Dresden University Hospital and also as the director of the Institute of Radiooncology at the Helmholtz-Center in Dresden-Rossendorf.

Hartmut Goldschmidt (National Center for Tumor Diseases, Heidelberg) is awarded for „Clinical Research“, Thomas Brabletz (Nikolaus-Fiebiger-Center for Molecular Medicine, University Erlangen) receives the award for „Experimental Research“.

About DKFZ

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 3,000 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. The staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg, where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. In the German

Consortium for Translational Cancer Research (DKTK), one of six German Centers for Health Research, DKFZ maintains translational centers at seven university partnering sites. Combining excellent university hospitals with high-profile research at a Helmholtz Center is an important contribution to improving the chances of cancer patients. DKFZ is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers, with ninety percent of its funding coming from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

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