

## An international centre in Brno has received a unique grant. It will research aging and age-related diseases, such as cancer and chronic inflammation

Press release, 8 June 2018, Brno

**The International Clinical Research Center at St. Anne's University Hospital in Brno (FNUSA-ICRC) obtained a unique grant amounting to almost CZK 700 million. The grant is meant to develop a research team comprised of approximately 220 researchers. They will focus on research into aging and age-related diseases, namely cancer, chronic inflammation and degenerative brain and heart diseases.**

The project entitled *A Molecular, Cell and Clinical Approach to Healthy Aging (abbreviated ENOCH)* was approved for a grant from the EU Structural Funds, specifically from the Operational Programme Research, Development and Education, administered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. The main research objective of the project is to formulate a joint research programme that is focused on research into aging and age-related diseases, namely cancer, chronic inflammation and degenerative diseases. The project is a milestone for cooperation at the regional level as it brings together five top translation medicine research centres in Moravia.

The project will involve more than 220 researchers from FNUSA-ICRC as the main project beneficiary, the Institute of Molecular and Translation Medicine at Palacký University in Olomouc (IMTM), the Regional Centre of Applied Molecular Oncology of the Masaryk Oncological Institute (RECAMO), the Department of Neurology at the Faculty of Medicine, Olomouc University Hospital, and the Blood Cancer Research Group at Ostrava University (BCRG). Researchers will be divided into four main research programmes according to their specialization. The first group, *Aging and Cancer*, will research the relationship between cancer and old age. The second group, *Aging and Chronic Inflammation*, will focus on the research into chronic inflammation related to cell aging. The *Degenerative Processes in Aging* will research some of the most common degenerative brain and heart diseases. The last *Age Modulation* group will focus on healthy aging and methods of slowing down the process of aging in their research.

The project to be implemented between 2018 and 2023 will help develop a unique platform for leading scientists in Moravia within which researchers will communicate and link their knowledge and experience related to the issue of aging and related disorders. *"Research will be carried out by experts in the Czech Republic which will further enhance existing long-term links to collaborating research institutions abroad, such as The Mayo Clinic and The University of Montreal, and will also build and support both new relationships and those that are newly established, such as with the Brain Research Institute in South Korea and The University of Melbourne,"* said the head of FNUSA-ICRC, **Gorazd B. Stokin**.

The Czech population has been aging and this trend will continue. People 65 and older account for one-fifth of the population. According to the Czech Statistical Office, the population of the Czech Republic was over 10.6 million last year; as many as 2 million were senior citizens. Based on estimates, the percentage of people older than 65 should nearly double by 2060 compared to people in the work force, and reach approximately 56%. Experts believe that with advances in medical care, people in developed countries will live to be as old as 120 in the relatively near future.

*"Today's world faces unprecedented demographic changes that involve especially the aging of the population which, together with new emerging age-related diseases, pose a significant challenge for health care, economy and society as such,"* says the Director of **St. Anne's University Hospital in Brno, Martin Pavlík**. *"This new project*



*will improve our understanding of aging, will help develop new preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic solutions for age-related disorders that will make society view aging as an advantage, rather than a problem,” adds Pavlík.*

**The International Clinical Research Centre at St. Anne’s University Hospital Brno (FNUSA-ICRC)** is a prestigious international project that was founded in the Czech Republic in 2011. The international centre, financed largely through national and international grants, focuses on research into heart and brain diseases with the aim of finding new technologies, medical procedures and methods and medication for prevention, including diagnostics and personalized care. Currently, more than 300 researchers and physicians from the Czech Republic, USA, Canada, Argentina and almost 20 EU countries participate in FNUSA-ICRC activities. In addition, FNUSA-ICRC collaborates on international research with scientists and academic institutions from all over the world. The centre collaborates with The University of California, San Diego, The University of South Florida, The Mayo Clinic, The Medical University of Vienna, The Karolinska Institutet in Sweden and two university hospitals in China.

