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A Two-Decade Quest for Targeted Cancer Treatments

An interview with **Paul Sorensen**, Pediatric Oncologist, University of British Columbia
and **Chrisoula Giannaris**, Head, Medical Affairs - Hematology, Oncology & Radiology, Bayer Inc.

Poul Sorensen

The challenge with doing childhood cancer research is that most people in the world, they don't really know much about childhood cancer. They assume that it doesn't really happen in kids. But it does, and it's a very different disease than in adults.

We've learned that there's so much more that you can derive knowledge-wise from studying childhood cancer because the genetics are usually a lot simpler. So by studying childhood cancer, not only can we understand how to target that specific disease, but we can learn about what's going on in adult cancers.

It's been difficult over the years to convince the world, the scientific community, that that's true but I think we're getting there. So we've had some very interesting and somewhat unorthodox relationships with certain companies, including Bayer.

Chrisoula Giannaris

About 20 years ago, Dr. Poul Sorensen made a seminal discovery in which he identified a genetic alteration that causes a very rare form of cancer called



of products that can actually be used to treat this genetic alteration, and as a result lead to remarkable outcomes for patients.

Poul Sorensen

Bayer stepped in and said, wow this looks really interesting, and brought the rights to market the drug. And so I've been working with Bayer now for a number of years.

Chrisoula Giannaris

It's because of the work of Dr. Sorensen and the discovery of this new class of proteins that we now understand that this genetic alteration can actually happen across multiple tumour types. And as a result we're not just dealing with treating one type of rare cancer, but able to treat a multitude of cancers.

Poul Sorensen

It's now approved by the FDA, by Health Canada, by European regulatory bodies. So now it's used all over the world. So that's been this very interesting relationship with Bayer. They've been nothing but supportive for all of this, right? So that's been great.