

# PATHFINDER: A Prospective Study of a Multi-Cancer Early Detection Blood Test

## Deb Schrag, MD, MPH

Tomasz M. Beer, MD

Christina A. Dilaveri, MD

Eric A. Klein, MD

Catherine R. Marinac, PhD

Charles H. McDonnell, MD

Lincoln Nadauld, MD, PhD

Robert Reid, MD

Karen C. Chung, PharmD

Margarita Lopatin, MS

Eric T. Fung, MD, PhD

Presented 11 Sep 2022

On behalf of PATHFINDER study investigators



# DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Deb Schrag, MD, MPH  
Chair, Department of Medicine,  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center  
New York, NY USA

Study was funded by GRAIL, LLC, a subsidiary of Illumina, Inc.\*

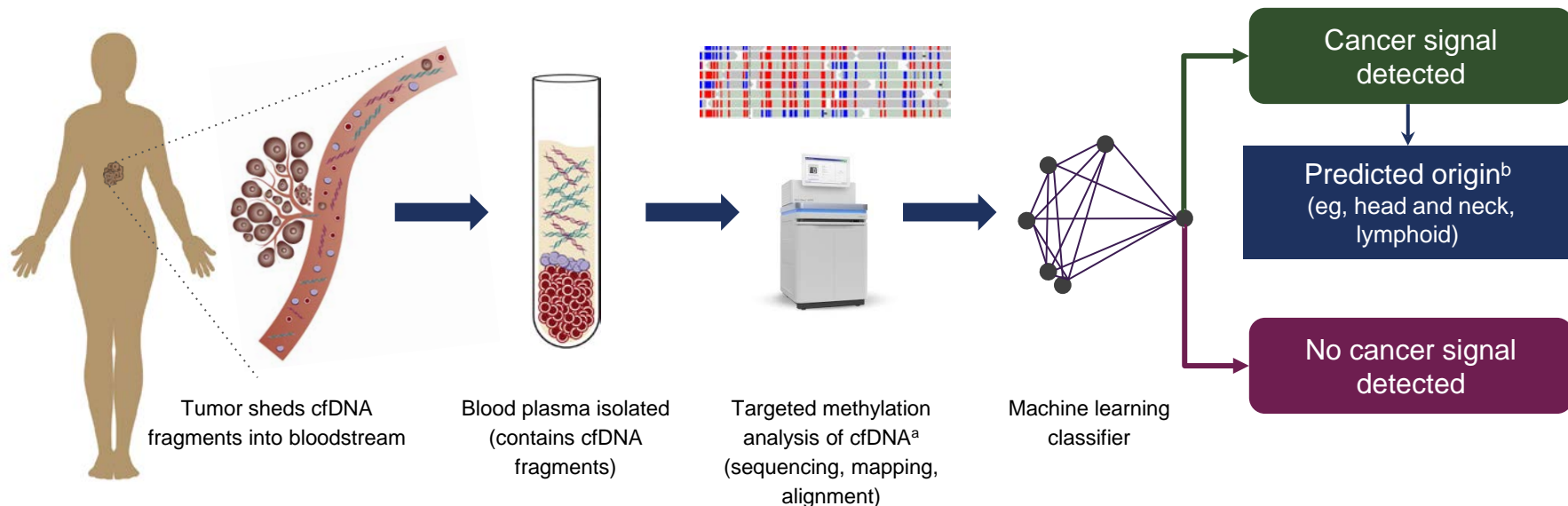
Presenting Author Disclosures: Uncompensated advisory role (GRAIL, LLC\*); research funding (GRAIL, LLC\* to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute); speaking fee (Pfizer); editor (Journal of the American Medical Association)

\*GRAIL, LLC, is currently held separate from Illumina Inc. under the terms of the Interim Measures Order of the European Commission dated 29 October 2021

# Background: Multi-Cancer Early Detection (MCED) Blood Assays

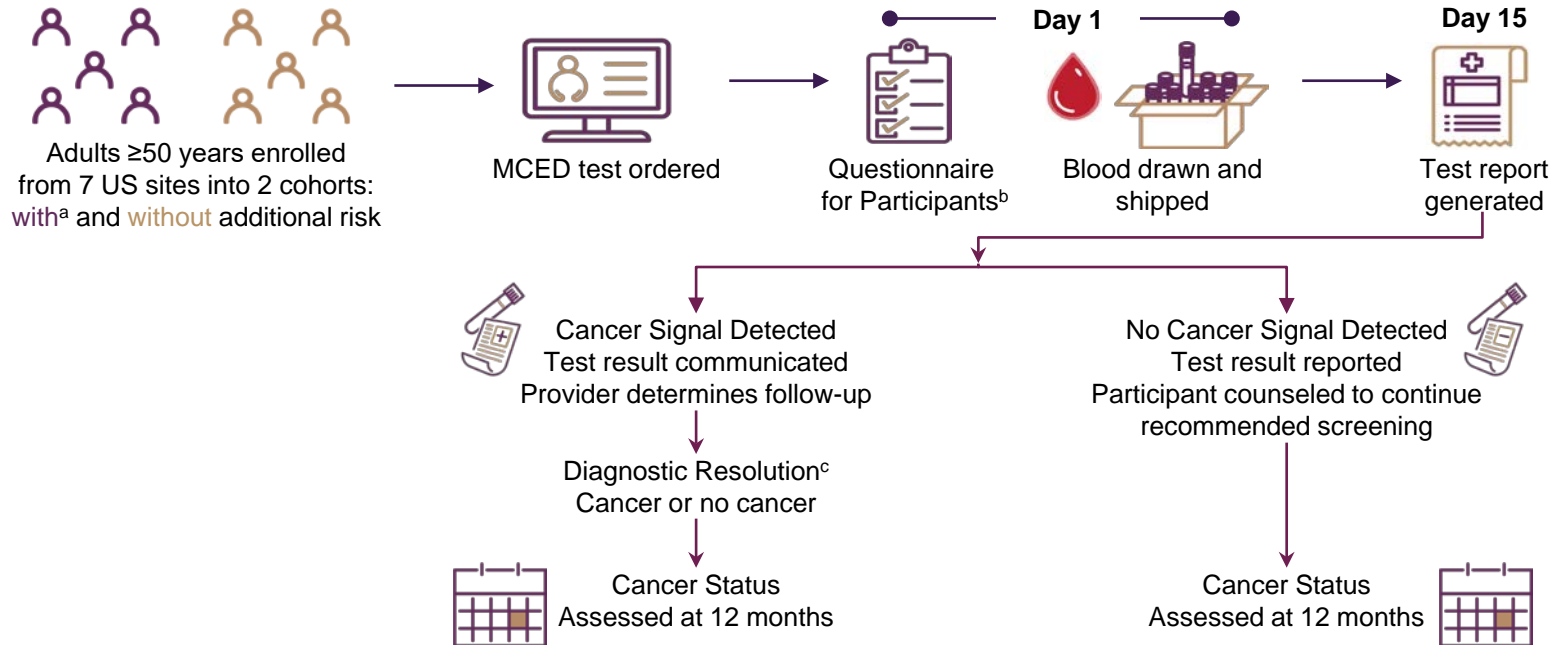
MCED testing uses a targeted methylation, next-generation sequencing (NGS)-based assay to:

- Detect and analyze cfDNA in the bloodstream
- Deploy machine learning to detect a cancer signal
- Predict the likely cancer signal origin (CSO)



cfDNA, cell-free DNA. <sup>a</sup>Bisulfite treatment; targeted probes pull out fragments matching regions of interest. <sup>b</sup>For a detected signal, the MCED test predicts 1-2 cancer signal origins (CSO) that can be either an anatomic site (eg, colorectal) or a cellular lineage (eg, lymphoid). Adapted from Liu MC, et al. *Ann Oncol.* 2020;31(6):745-759. PMID: 33506766

# PATHFINDER: A Prospective Cohort Study to Return the Results of MCED Tests to Participants



MCED, multi-cancer early detection. <sup>a</sup>Previous history of cancer, smoking, and genetic risk; <sup>b</sup>Also collected at other time points during the study; <sup>c</sup>Defined as date when study team determines to end diagnostic evaluation triggered by a "signal detected" test result. Adapted from Nadauld LD, et al. *Cancers (Base)*. 2021;13(14):3501. PMID: 34298717.

# Study Motivation

## Understand the Clinical Experience of MCED Testing

- Understand the diagnostic evaluations precipitated by receipt of a “signal detected” MCED test
- Evaluate MCED test performance characteristics
- Understand levels of participant anxiety and distress associated with MCED testing

PATHFINDER: NCT04241796

Participants were enrolled from **December 2019 to December 2020**  
in the ambulatory care practices at 7 US health care systems

Participants were followed for one year from the date of MCED testing (**through December 2021**)

# PATHFINDER Study Objectives

## Primary Objective

- Assess extent of diagnostic testing required to achieve diagnostic resolution following a “signal detected” test result
  - Time to diagnostic resolution
    - Diagnostic resolution was ascertained by the MD who ordered and disclosed the MCED test result
  - Number and types of diagnostic tests

## Secondary Objectives

- Evaluate test performance
  - Specificity
  - Positive Predictive Value (PPV)
  - Negative Predictive Value (NPV)
  - Number Needed to Screen (NNS), Yield
  - Cancer Signal Origin<sup>a</sup> (ie, Predicted Origin) Accuracy
- Evaluate participant reported anxiety, distress, satisfaction (presented in poster #908P)

<sup>a</sup>For a detected signal, the MCED test predicts 1-2 cancer signal origins (CSO) that can be either an anatomic site (eg, colorectal) or a cellular lineage (eg, lymphoid).

# PATHFINDER Eligibility Criteria

## Inclusion:

- **Adults  $\geq 50$  years** who were eligible for either:
  - **With Additional Risk Cohort**
  - **Without Additional Risk Cohort**
- **Eligibility for With Additional Risk Cohort:**
  - **Lifetime history of smoking at least 100 cigarettes**
  - **Hereditary cancer predisposition<sup>a</sup>**
  - **A history of cancer with no treatment for  $>3$  years<sup>b</sup>**
- **Eligibility for Without Additional Risk Cohort:**
  - **None of the above risk factors**

## Exclusion:

- **Clinical suspicion of malignancy**
- **Undergoing diagnostic evaluation for malignancy**
- **History of invasive or hematologic malignancy diagnosed  $<3$  years before enrollment**
- **Definitive treatment for invasive or hematologic malignancy  $<3$  years before enrollment<sup>b</sup>**

<sup>a</sup>Genetic cancer predisposition, hereditary cancer syndrome, or meeting criteria for germline testing based on NCCN guidelines.

<sup>b</sup>Personal history of invasive or hematologic malignancy, with definitive treatment completed  $>3$  years prior to enrollment. Adjuvant hormone therapy for breast cancer was permissible.

# Participant Characteristics

	With Additional Risk <sup>a</sup> n = 3,681	Without Additional Risk n = 2,940	Total N = 6,621
<b>Age<sup>b</sup>, in years, mean (SD)</b>	64.7 (8.7)	61.6 (8.1)	63.4 (8.6)
<b>Female</b>	65%	62%	63%
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	93%	89%	92%
<b>College Degree or Higher</b>	59%	71%	65%
<b>Up to Date With Standard Cancer Screening Prior to MCED Testing</b>			
Colorectal Cancer <sup>c</sup>	91%	92%	92%
Breast Cancer <sup>d</sup>	78%	83%	80%

<sup>a</sup>Previous history of cancer, smoking, and hereditary risk.

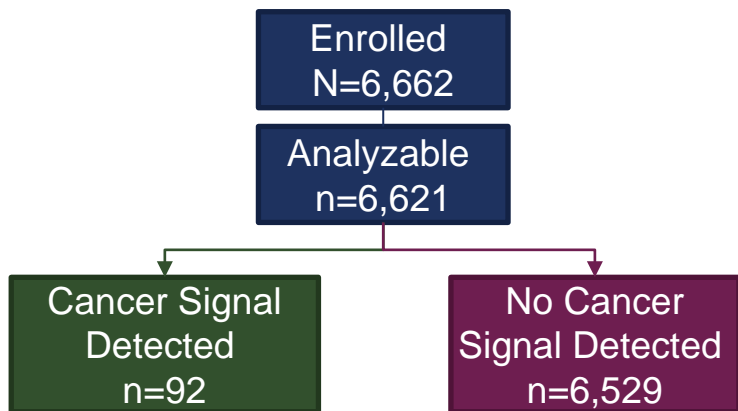
<sup>b</sup>Participants >85 were eligible to participate, but to protect confidentiality, 85 years was the maximum age recorded and used in calculations for participants ≥85 years of age.

<sup>c</sup>Participants ≤75 years old, up to date with USPSTF colorectal cancer screening recommendations (n=4888 total eligible with complete information).

<sup>d</sup>Women 50-74 years old up to date with breast cancer screening recommendations (USPSTF, MRI, or ultrasound; n=3547 total eligible with complete information).



# Cancer Signal Detection



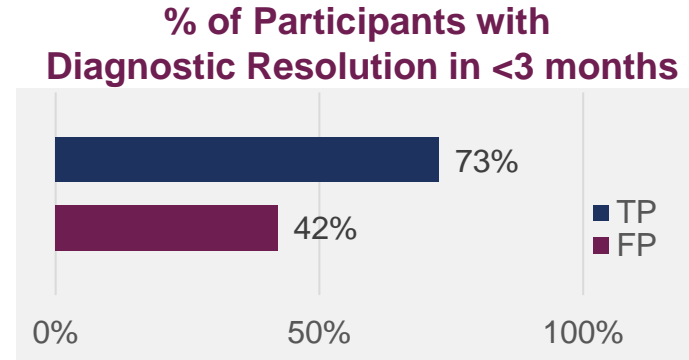
	With Additional Risk <sup>a</sup> n = 3,681	Without Additional Risk n = 2,940	Total N = 6,621
Signal Detected	1.5%	1.2%	<b>1.4%</b>
No Signal Detected	98.5%	98.8%	98.6%

<sup>a</sup>Previous history of cancer, smoking, and genetic risk.

# Primary Objective: Time to Achieve Diagnostic Resolution

**Time to Diagnostic Resolution for Participants with MCED Signal Detected**  
(N=90; not calculable for 2 participants who began diagnostic evaluation before test results returned)

	TP	FP	Total
	33	57 <sup>a</sup>	90
<b>Median # of Days to Diagnostic Resolution (Interquartile Range)</b>	<b>57</b> <b>(33, 143)</b>	<b>162</b> <b>(44, 248)</b>	<b>79</b> <b>(37, 219)</b>



- Median time to diagnostic resolution was longer for FPs than TPs
- Most TPs reached resolution in <3 months

TP, true positive; FP, false positive.

<sup>a</sup>Includes 1 participant without diagnostic resolution who was conservatively assumed to be FP.

# Primary Objective: Extent of Diagnostic Evaluation

## Extent and Types of Diagnostic Evaluation for Participants with MCED Signal Detected (N=90)

% of participants	TP N=33 <sup>a</sup>	FP N=57 <sup>b</sup>	Total N=90 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Any imaging procedure, %</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>92</b>
Any advanced imaging (CT, PET, MRI)	<b>88</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Any invasive procedure, %</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>49</b>
Non-surgical invasive procedure (endoscopy, FNA, core biopsy)	<b>79</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>47</b>
Surgical invasive procedure	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

TP, true positive; FNA, fine needle aspiration; FP, false positive.

<sup>a</sup>Two participants with 'signal detected' MCEd test result (TPs) were excluded from the diagnostic workup analysis because diagnostic testing was initiated before MCEd results were returned.

<sup>b</sup>Includes 1 participant without diagnostic resolution who was conservatively assumed to be FP.

# Safety

- There were no serious, study-related adverse events reported as **a result of MCED testing**
- There were no serious, study-related adverse events **due to diagnostic workup** prompted by receipt of a “signal detected” MCED test result

# Secondary Objective: Accuracy of Predicted Cancer Origin

Test Performance: Ability to Predict Origin of Malignancy

	TP	FP	Total
<b>Participants, n</b>	35	57	92
Determinate predicted origin	<b>34</b>	53	87
Indeterminate predicted origin	1	4	5

<b>Predicted Origin Accuracy</b>	
<b>First Predicted Origin,<sup>a</sup> n</b>	29/34 <sup>b</sup>
% (95% CI)	<b>85.3</b> (69.9-93.6)
<b>First or Second Predicted Origin,<sup>a,c</sup> n</b>	33/34 <sup>b</sup>
% (95% CI)	<b>97.1</b> (85.1-99.8)

- **The predicted origin helped to direct diagnostic workups**

CI, confidence interval.

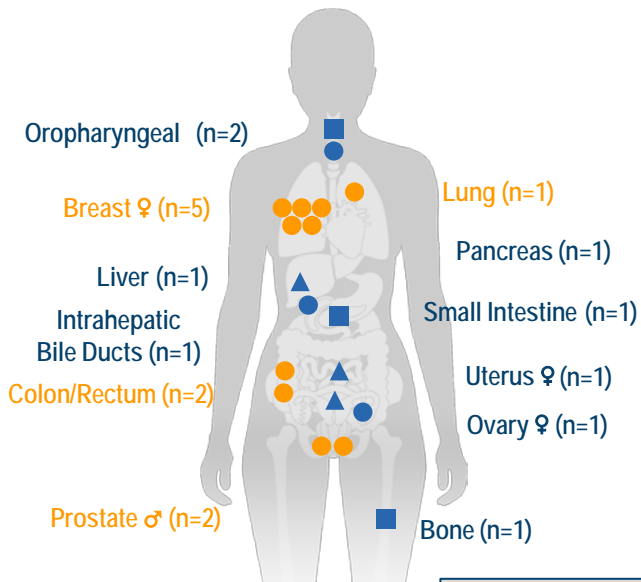
<sup>a</sup>For a detected signal, the MCED test predicts cancer signal origins (CSO) that can be either an anatomic site (eg, colorectal) or a cellular lineage (eg, lymphoid).

<sup>b</sup>Excludes 1 participant with indeterminate origin prediction from the true positive per study protocol.

<sup>c</sup>Proportion of first or second origin correctly predicted among true positive participants.

# Cancers Diagnosed After a True Positive MCED Signal

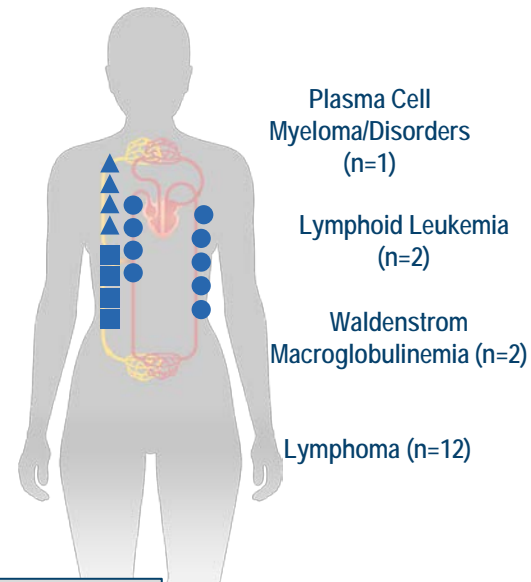
## 19 Solid Tumors



35 people were diagnosed with 36 cancers

- 24 in high-risk cohort
- 11 in not-high-risk cohort
- 7 recurrent cancers
- 14 early-stage cancers
- 26 cancers lacking standard screening

## 17 Hematologic Cancers



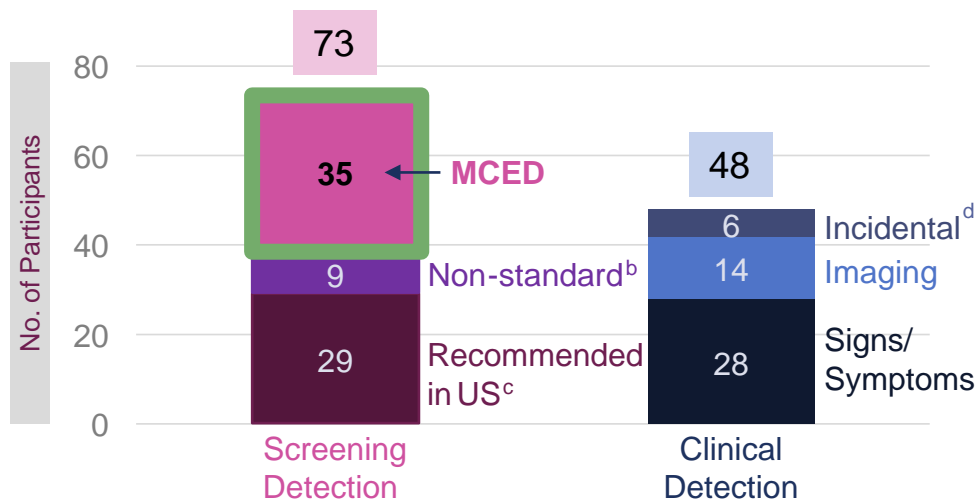
AJCC Staging: ▲ Stage I ■ Stage II ● Stage III/IV/No Stage/Recurrent

Available Screening: **USPSTF cancer screening** or **No standard screening**

# Cancers Identified Within One Year of MCED Testing

Participants with Cancers Detected by Either Screening or Clinical Findings

121 participants had a cancer diagnosis within 1 year



- 35/121 (29%) had cancer diagnosed and positive MCED
  - 2/35 had cancer detected by the MCED test but work-up began before results were disclosed

MCED, multi-cancer early detection.

<sup>a</sup>Based on participants with cancer status assessment at the end of the study.

<sup>b</sup>3 thyroid and 6 melanoma.

<sup>c</sup>Breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancer.

<sup>d</sup>1 incidental radiology finding, 1 incidental finding on routine physical exam, 2 changed lab values, 1 surveillance of prior cancer, 1 follow-up after MGUS diagnosis.

# Secondary Objective: MCED Test Performance

Test Performance Metric	Result	Number
Cancer Signal Detected	1.4%	92/6621
Specificity <sup>a</sup>	99.1%	6253/6290
Positive Predictive Value (PPV)	38.0%	35/92
Negative Predictive Value (NPV) <sup>a</sup>	98.6%	6235/6321
Number needed to screen to detect one cancer	189	6621/35
Yield	0.5%	35/6621

MCED, multi-cancer early detection.

<sup>a</sup>Based on participants with cancer status assessment at the end of the study.



# Secondary Objective: Performance of a Refined MCED Test

- The banked specimens were re-analyzed using a refined version of the MCED assay
- These results were not returned to participants or their physicians
- The refined MCED assay was intended to:
  - Reduce false positives with hematologic predictions
  - Improve prediction of the tumor origin

# Secondary Objective: Performance of a Refined MCED Test

Test Performance Metric	Refined Version of MCED Test (Results Not Returned to Participants or Providers)		MCED Test Results Returned
Cancer Signal Detected	0.9%	58/6578	1.4%
Specificity <sup>a</sup>	99.5%	6216/6249	99.1%
Positive Predictive Value PPV	43.1%	25/58	38.0%
Negative Predictive Value NPV <sup>a</sup>	98.5%	6216/6311	98.6%
Number needed to screen, No.	263	6578/25	189
Yield	0.38%	25/6578	0.53%
First Predicted Origin	84.0%	21/25	85.3%
First or Second Predicted Origin <sup>b</sup>	88.0%	22/25	97.1%

<sup>a</sup>Based on participants with cancer status assessment at the end of the study.

<sup>b</sup>Proportion of first or second origins correctly predicted among true positive participants.

# Conclusions

- MCED screening was safely implemented for adults with and without additional cancer risk
- 1.4% of participants had a cancer signal detected
- 0.5% of participants were diagnosed with cancer due to MCED signal detection
- Median time to diagnostic resolution was 79 days
- High accuracy of predicted origin enabled targeted diagnostic evaluations
- Most diagnostic evaluations involved imaging, few required invasive procedures
- This study shows that it is feasible to detect cancers early using blood tests

# Limitations and Caveats

- It will be important for future clinical utility studies to evaluate whether MCED testing reduces mortality, the primary goal of all cancer screening
- Study cohort had limited diversity
- 12 month follow-up was incomplete for 3% of the cohort
- Further work is needed to understand the reasons underlying both false positive and false negative MCED test results
- Participation in current cancer screenings with established effectiveness must continue as MCED technologies are refined

# Future/Ongoing Work

- Evaluation of MCED screening in cohorts with greater socioeconomic, ethnic and racial diversity
- Optimization of test performance characteristics
- Ongoing PATHFINDER2 study is screening 20,000 individuals using the refined version of the MCED test
- NHS-Galleri (ISRCTN 91431511) will assess clinical utility of the refined MCED test in a randomized trial of 140,000 adults 50-77 in the UK's NHS. This pragmatic trial compares the incidence of advanced cancer diagnoses among participants who have annual MCED screening for 3 years to those who have usual care only

Thank you to study participants who were recruited from:

- Dana Farber Cancer Institute
- Sutter Health
- OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
- US Oncology
- Intermountain Healthcare
- Cleveland Clinic
- Mayo Clinic

European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)

Via Ginevra 4, CH-6900 Lugano

T. +41 (0)91 973 19 00

[esmo@esmo.org](mailto:esmo@esmo.org)

[esmo.org](http://esmo.org)

**PATHFINDER Secondary Objective:  
Patient Reported Outcomes  
Presented in poster #908P**

