



## THE INTERNATIONAL MYELOMA FOUNDATION LAUNCHES THE BLACK SWAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE™ TO DEVELOP THE VERY FIRST DEFINITIVE CURE FOR MULTIPLE MYELOMA

**—The Initiative Aims to Eradicate all Minimal Residual Disease to Achieve a Cure—**

**—It Is Led by an Elite Team of Myeloma Experts from Major Medical Institutions in the US and Europe—**

**North Hollywood, CA, March 12, 2013** – The International Myeloma Foundation (IMF) – improving the quality of life of myeloma patients while working toward prevention and a cure – today announced the launch of the BLACK SWAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE™ (BSRI™), a unique project to develop the first actual cure for myeloma. The BSRI is led by a multi-national consortium of leading myeloma experts who see that the opportunity to cure the first cohort of patients is now within reach.

“Through medical innovation we can already achieve long-term complete remissions in 15 to 20 percent of myeloma patients,” said Brian G.M. Durie, MD, Chairman and Co-Founder of the IMF. “Now by increasing the level of innovation further, we’re ready to bridge the gap from long-term remission to cure, by identifying the best treatments at the best time to achieve the best objective, our objective being a new definition of cure based on a complete eradication of any residual myeloma.”

These facets of our initiative will be pursued simultaneously, led by an elite team of experts from the United States and Europe:

- Objective – defining a cure as MRD-Zero™, the eradication of Minimal Residual Disease. In the past, most cancer “cures” were defined simply by waiting a fixed number of years to see what happened. Now, with a new understanding of myeloma at the cellular and molecular levels, the IMF is developing ultra-sensitive tests to accurately measure MRD and define its absence as a cure.
- Treatments – new trials will enable us to select the most effective anti-MRD drug combinations for patient subgroups that will be identified at the cellular and molecular levels in order to optimize the efficacy of treatments.
- Timing of treatment – early intervention, at onset or relapse, can eradicate the most residual disease.

“Just as people who had only seen white swans could not imagine the existence of black swans, until very recently we could not even consider the possibility of a cure,” said Susie Novis, President and Co-founder of the IMF. “But now, we have created a paradigm shift by taking an entirely new approach to monitoring treatment efficacy to achieve a cure, something we couldn’t even imagine before. We may actually see the first myeloma patients restored to a normal, healthy life, free of their cancer for the first time ever.”

Initial work began on the BLACK SWAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE in the summer of 2012. Now with the full launch, the initiative will result in new testing capabilities and new clinical trials before the end of this year.

Myeloma, also called multiple myeloma, is a cancer of cells in the bone marrow that affects production of red cells, white cells and stem cells and can damage bone. It is growing in numbers and affecting increasingly younger people.

Information can be found at [www.blackswan.myeloma.org](http://www.blackswan.myeloma.org).

**ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL MYELOMA FOUNDATION**

Celebrating its 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary, the International Myeloma Foundation reaches more than 240,000 members in 120 countries worldwide. A 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of myeloma patients and their families, the IMF focuses on four key areas: research, education, support, and advocacy. To date, the IMF has conducted more than 250 educational seminars worldwide, maintains a world-renowned hotline, and established the International Myeloma Working Group (IMWG), a collaborative research initiative focused on improving myeloma treatment options for patients. The IMF can be reached at (800) 452-CURE (2873). The global website is [www.myeloma.org](http://www.myeloma.org).

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