The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation has awarded a $5 million grant to Maine Medical Center (MMC) for the creation of a statewide initiative to improve the prevention, early detection, and treatment of lung cancer in Maine, where incidence rates and deaths due to lung cancer are among the highest in the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Maine Lung Cancer Prevention and Screening (Maine LungCAPS) Initiative is a four-year multi-institution, multi-disciplinary collaboration of Maine health care providers and stakeholders.

“Maine LungCAPS Initiative is bringing together multisector partners and stakeholders to develop and validate innovative models for access and utilization of lung cancer screening, treatment, and care that are effective and sustainable for vulnerable populations throughout Maine,” says John Damonti, president of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation.

Maine Cancer Foundation is the primary co-funder for the project with a grant of $400,000 over four years. The Maine Economic Improvement Fund, through the University of Southern Maine, will contribute $200,000 to the project. “Maine’s high smoking rate, our rural nature, and barriers to health care all...

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Jennifer B. Monti, M.D., MPH, joined Maine Medical Partners - MaineHealth Cardiology Scarborough office, specializing in cardiovascular imaging, preventative cardiology, and the genetics of cardiovascular disease. She earned her medical and public health degrees from Case Western Reserve University. She completed her internal medicine residency at Johns Hopkins University, followed by a cardiology fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. During her training, Dr. Monti founded a biotech company focusing on the non-invasive estimate of systemic vascular resistance and has worked on a range of social entrepreneurship projects related to healthy food access in low-income settings.

Laura E. J. Sullivan, M.D., joined Maine Medical Partners - MaineHealth Cardiology in the Augusta and Waterville offices, specializing in all aspects of non-invasive imaging, including cardiac MRI, CT angiography, and transesophageal echocardiography. Dr. Sullivan earned her medical degree from the University of Nevada School of Medicine. She completed her residency in internal medicine at the University of Tennessee and a cardiology fellowship at St. Vincent Hospital and Health Services in Indianapolis, Indiana where she served as clinical instructor for internal medicine residents and medical students. Dr. Sullivan has special interest in women’s health and congestive heart failure.

Outside of work, Dr. Sullivan enjoys reading, travel, swimming with her children, outdoor activities, savoring her husband’s from-scratch pizza, and pies.

‘Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation’ from front

contribute to high cancer rates,” says Tara Hill, executive director of the Maine Cancer Foundation. “The case for MCF to co-fund this initiative was obvious and compelling.”

Maine LungCAPS Initiative Principal Investigator Paul Han, M.D., M.A., MPH, director of the Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation at the MMC Research Institute says, “The Maine LungCAPS Initiative will develop the infrastructure and inter-institutional collaboration required to expand access to evidence-based lung cancer prevention and screening services, and to facilitate earlier and more effective treatment of lung cancer for patients across the state.”

The Maine LungCAPS Initiative’s major partners include: MaineGeneral Prevention Center, MaineHealth Center for Tobacco Independence, Maine Quality Counts, American Lung Association of the Northeast, American Cancer Society, University of Southern Maine Muskie School of Public Service, Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems, Maine Public Health Association, and statewide health care providers and advocacy organizations.

These partner organizations will work together on several major activities, including educating health professionals, patients, and community members about lung cancer prevention and screening, and developing effective ways of providing these services.

The Initiative will target individuals at the highest risk of cancer: adult smokers living in rural communities with limited access to health care.

“The Maine LungCAPS Initiative will test innovative strategies to reach these individuals and ultimately reduce suffering and death from lung cancer in our state,” says Dr. Han. These strategies include using both community health workers and telemedicine technology to provide lung cancer prevention and screening services.

The four-year project will begin this summer.