



International User Group Meeting

22nd and 23rd of April 2026

"OncoXPLORE: Advancing Liquid Biopsy into Clinical Practice. From academic development at KU Leuven to clinical implementation and commercialisation."

Gian Eraerts, MD, PhD researcher

Overview

1. Liquid biopsy to overcome unmet clinical needs
2. Discovery of novel (epi)genomic biomarkers
3. OncoXPLORE: going beyond mutations
4. Technical & clinical performance of OncoXPLORE
5. Perspectives for future research

Disclaimer

No conflicts of interest to disclose

GIPXPLOREPLUZ/OncoXPLORE KU LEUVEN



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1. Liquid biopsy to overcome unmet clinical needs



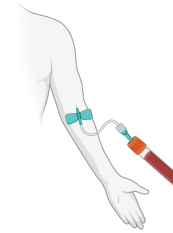
Clinical use cases with unmet diagnostical needs

Cancer type	Actionable alterations	Limitations of tissue NGS
<p>Metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC)</p> 	<p>Mutations in <i>BRCA1/2</i> or other homologous recombination repair (HRR) genes</p>	<p>High failure rate of tissue biopsies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bone metastases → decalcification affects DNA • Archival primary tissue upon progression → old, degraded FFPE blocks
<p>Hormone receptor positive, HER2-negative metastatic breast cancer</p> 	<p><i>ESR1</i> variants, mutations in the PI3K pathway</p>	<p>Resistance mutations (<i>ESR1</i>) emerge under therapy pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebiopsy is invasive and sometimes not feasible • Single-site biopsy may miss tumor heterogeneity
<p>Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)</p> 	<p><i>EGFR</i>, <i>KRAS</i>, <i>BRAF</i>, <i>HER2</i> variants; <i>MET</i> exon 14 skipping events and <i>ROS1</i>, <i>ALK</i>, <i>RET</i> rearrangements</p>	<p>Lessions not always accessible for diagnostic biopsy</p>

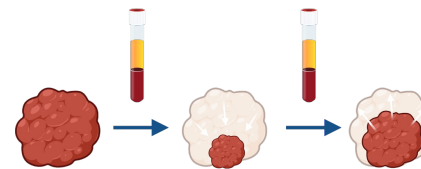
Advantages of liquid biopsy

Minimally invasive

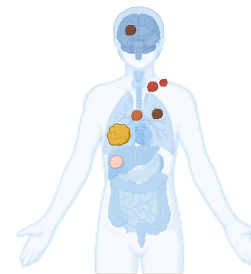
alternative when tissue biopsy is not feasible or tissue NGS has failed



Allows serial monitoring to track emerging resistance mechanisms



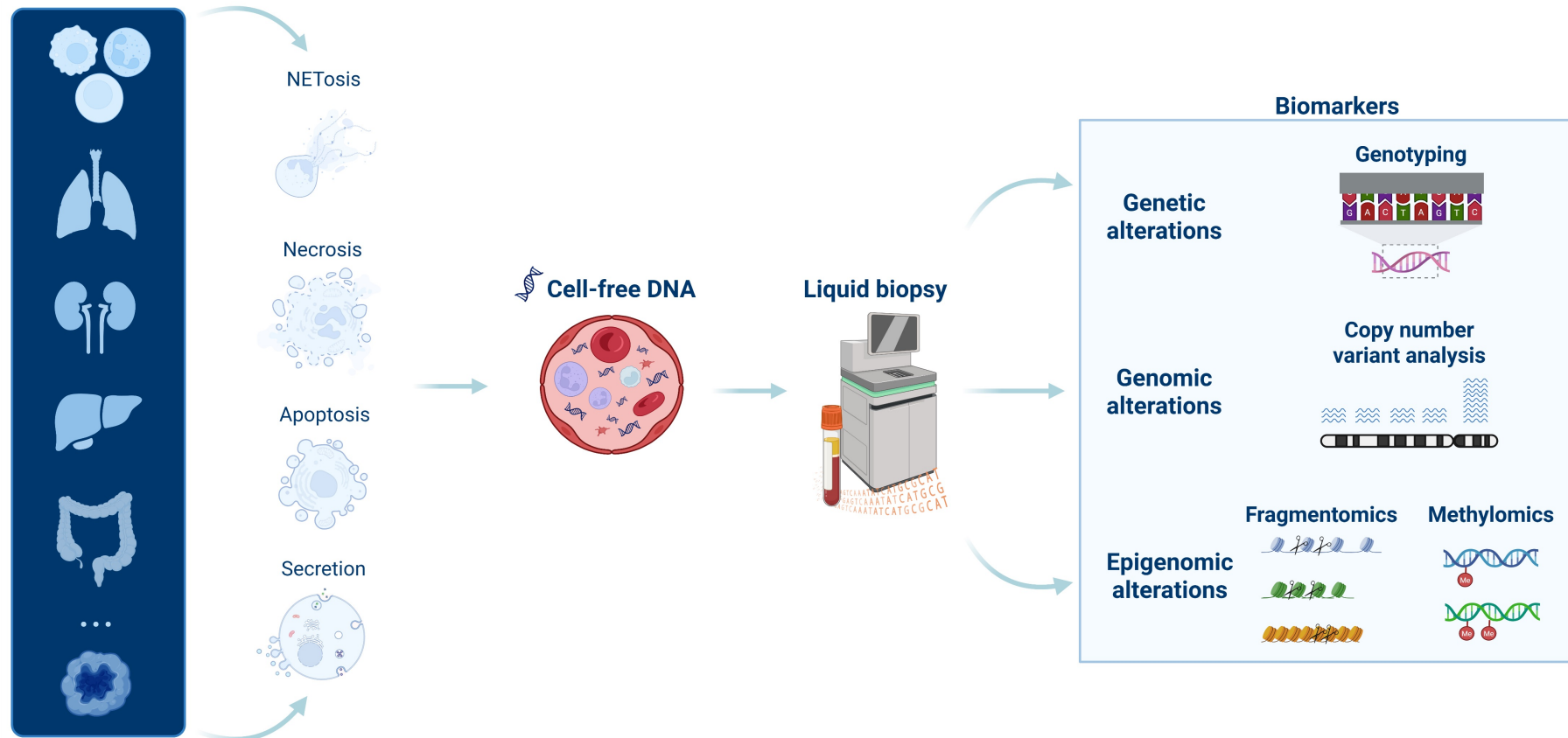
Captures tumor heterogeneity across multiple metastatic sites



2. Discovery of novel (epi)genomic biomarkers

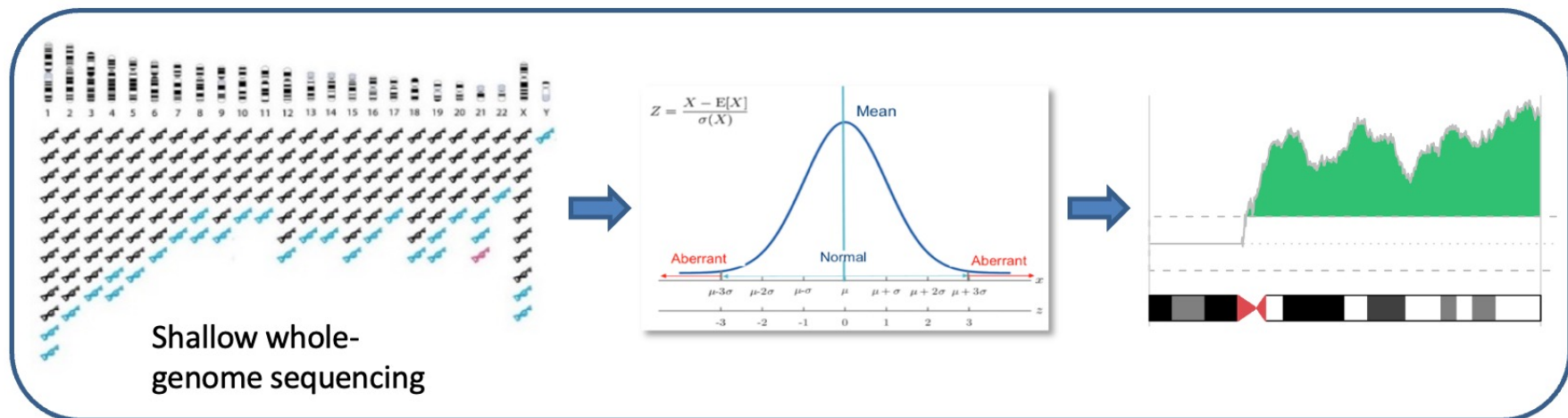


Going beyond mutations: (epi)genomics



Going beyond mutations: genome-wide copy number alterations

Non-invasive prenatal testing with (NIPT) with GIPSeq:



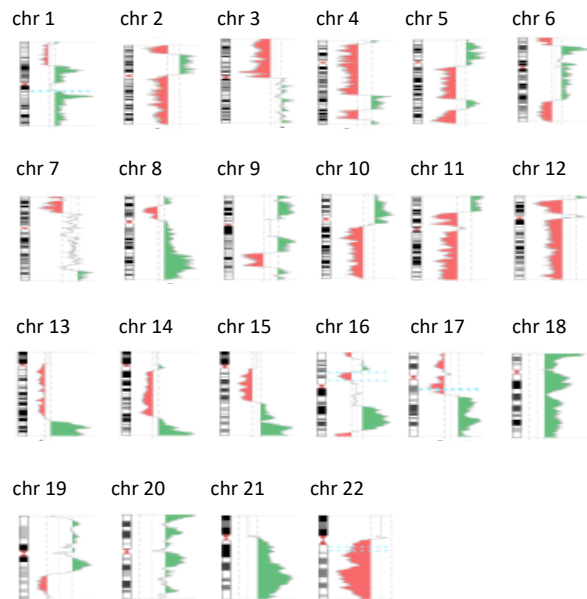
GIPSeq: Clinically implemented pipeline since 2013

Incidental discovery of cancer in pregnant women during NIPT



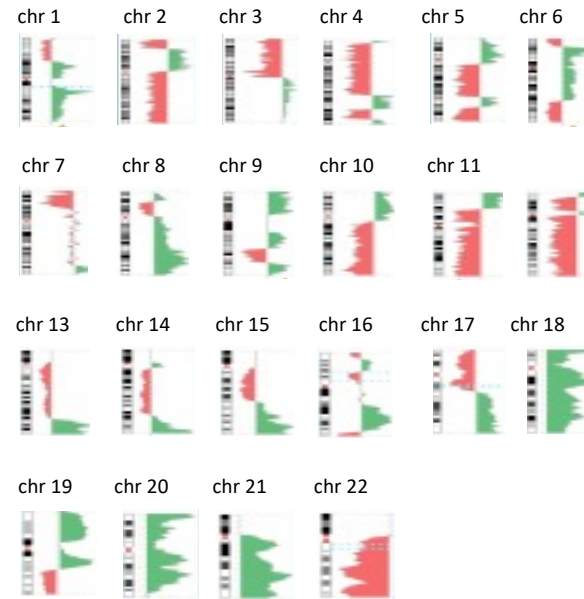
Invasive breast ductal adenocarcinoma

cell-free plasma DNA



=

tumour DNA

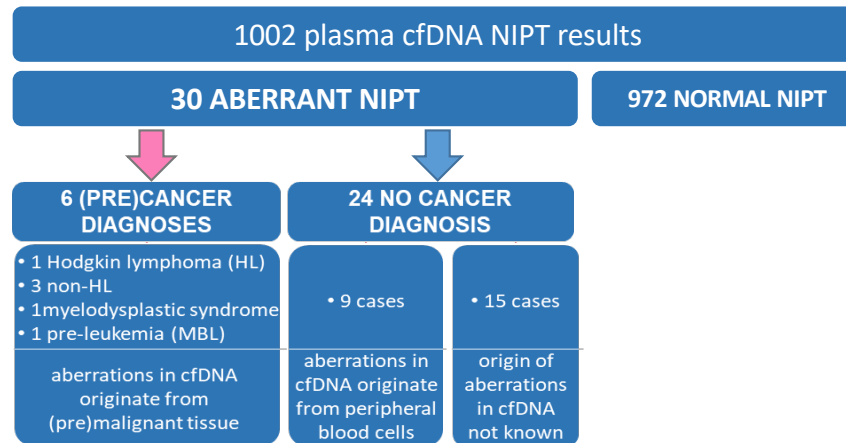


CNA profiling as a cancer screening tool in the elderly population?

ANNALS OF ONCOLOGY

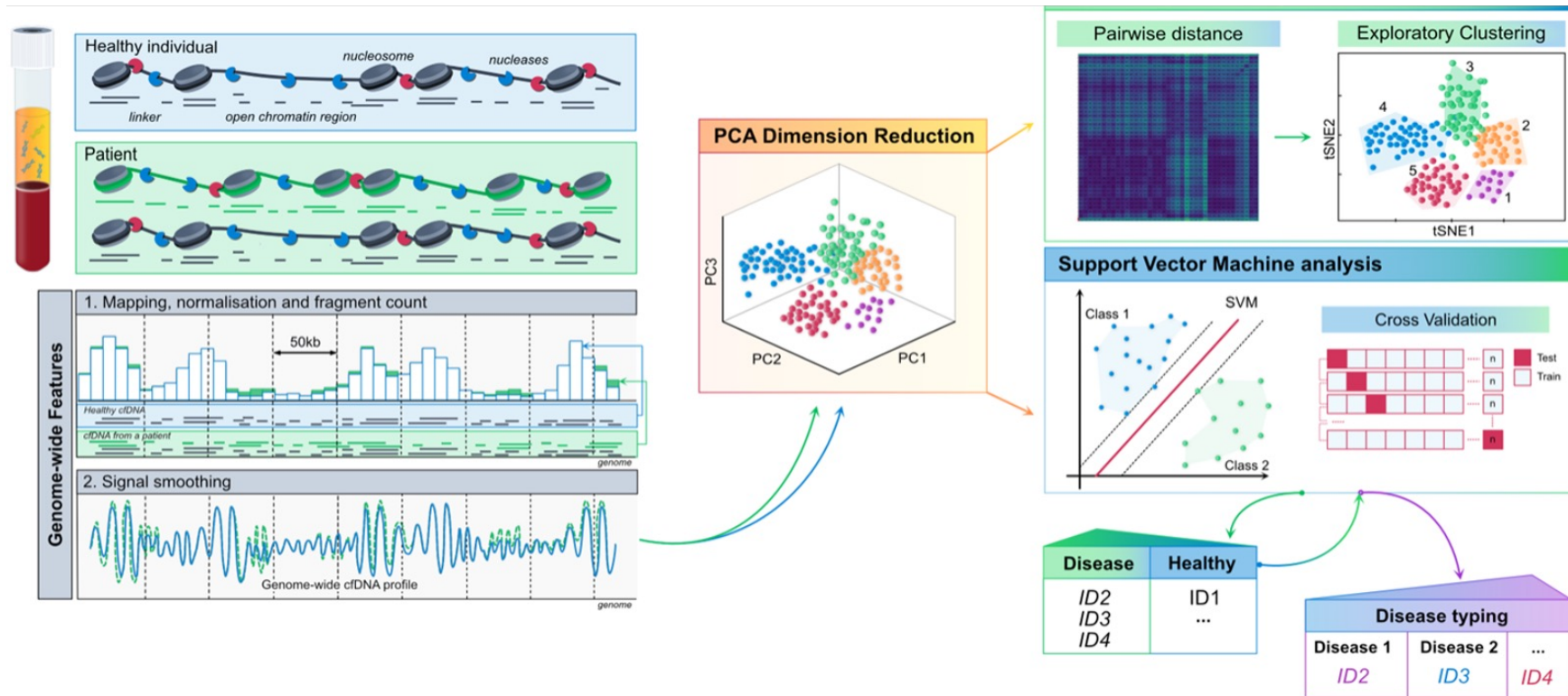
Genomewide copy number alteration screening of circulating plasma DNA: potential for the detection of incipient tumors

L. Lenaerts¹, P. Vandenbergh^{2,3}, N. Brison², H. Che², M. Neofytou², M. Verhecke^{1,4}, L. Leemans¹, C. Maggen^{1,4}, B. Dewaele⁵, L. Dehaspe², S. Vanderschueren^{6,7}, D. Dierickx^{1,3}, V. Vandecaveye^{8,9}, F. Amant^{1,4,10,11,12*} & J. R. Vermeesch^{2,5,13*}



2015-2016 initiated study

Identification of genome-wide cfDNA signatures



3. OncoXPLORE: going beyond mutations



OncNGS consortium

OncNGS

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European Call for the future Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) solutions for cancer

Pre-commercial Procedure

Phase 0

Phase I

Phase II

Phase III

Phase III : Clinical validation of a limited set of pre-commercial devices

the functional and technical properties of the selected solutions will be evaluated in an operational environment.
Minimum of 2 pre-commercial devices will be deployed.

Overall duration : 18 months – Execution : 15 months

[View more](#)

KU LEUVEN

 **OncoDNA**
THE CANCER THERANOSTIC COMPANY

OncNGS consortium



OncNGS is a strong consortium composed of 8 buyers from 5 member states

- Sciensano (Belgium)
- Institut Jules Bordet (Belgium)
- Institut Curie (France)
- Hospices Civils de Lyon (France)
- Charite Universitaetsmedizin (Germany)
- Ludwig Maximilians Universitaet Muenchen (Germany)
- Alleanza Contro il Cancro (Italy)
- Institut Catala d'Oncologia (Spain)

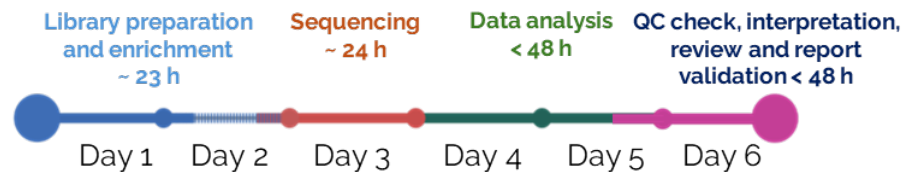
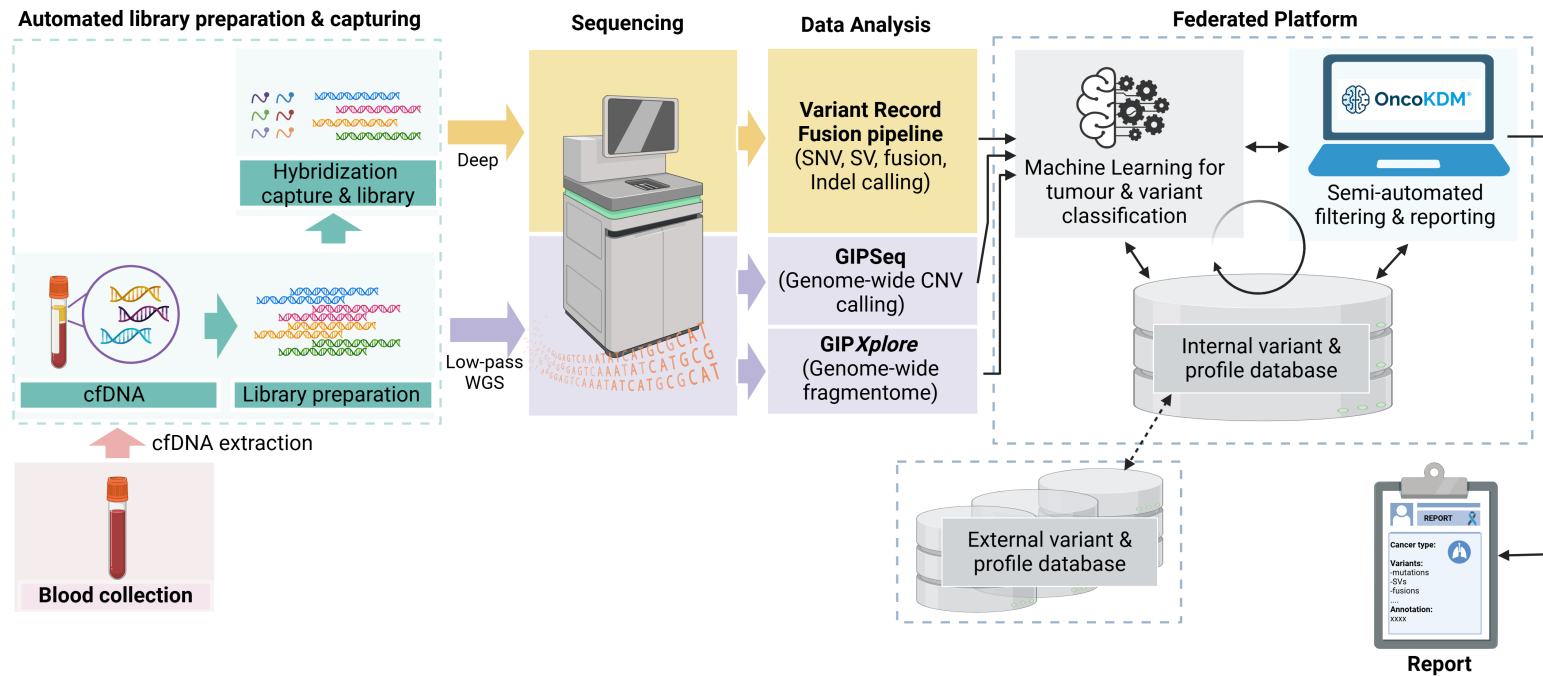


Supported by 6 entities with wide experience in their fields :

- Agència de Qualitat i Avaluació Sanitàries de Catalunya (AQuAS), expert in pre-commercial procurement (Spain)
- Belgian Cancer Registry, expert in cancer control (Belgium)
- Institut National du Cancer, expert in cancer control (France)
- Instituto de Investigación Biomédica de Salamanca, expert in biomedical research in the field of haematologic malignancies (Spain)
- Valle de Hebrón Instituto de Oncología, expert in biomedical research in the field of haematologic malignancies (Spain)
- De Clercq & Partners, expert in intellectual property rights and freedom to operate analysis (Belgium)



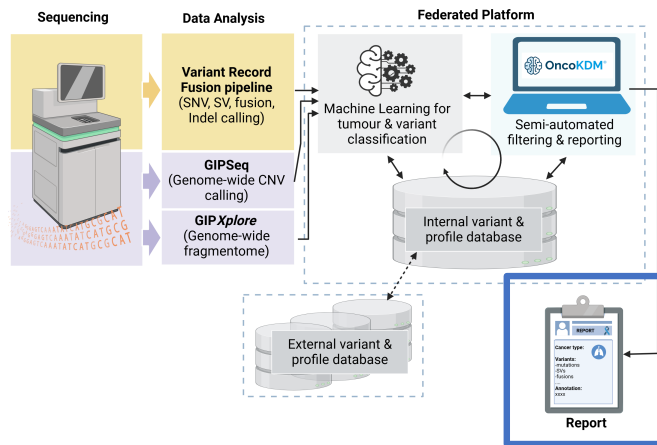
Cost-effective, scalable and fast off-the shelf solution



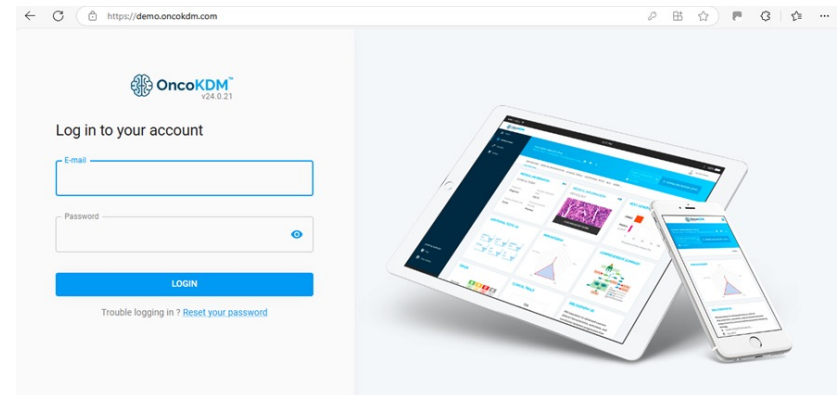
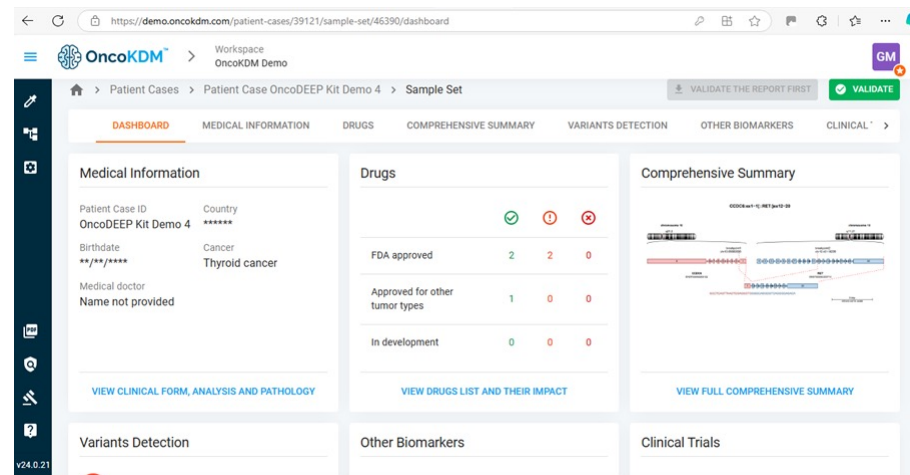
Comprehensive genomic profiling with OncoXPLORE

Sequencing	Feature	Output
Targeted Module (120M PE reads)	SNV & INDEL	Somatic mutation allele frequency (AF) across 441 genes
	Splicing variant	Splicing variants across 20bp intronic region on each exon with some introns (e.g. MET exon 14 skipping) receiving higher coverage
	MSI	MSI status based on ~300 loci
	TMB	Number of acquired non-synonymous variants per 1 Mb
	Translocation	Recurrent clinically relevant translocations: ALK, BRAF, EGFR, ETV6, EWSR1, FGFR2, FGFR3, NTRK1, NTRK2, PAX3, PAX8, RET, ROS1, TFE3 (solid); MYC, BCL2, BCL6, CCND1, IRF4 (haem)
	Focal CNV	CNV profiles to assess focal alterations
Low-Pass WGS Module (25M PE reads)	Large CNV (>1Mb)	Genome-wide aneuploidy detection
	Fragmentomics	Fragmentome-based cancer-type prediction

Clinical interpretation & reporting



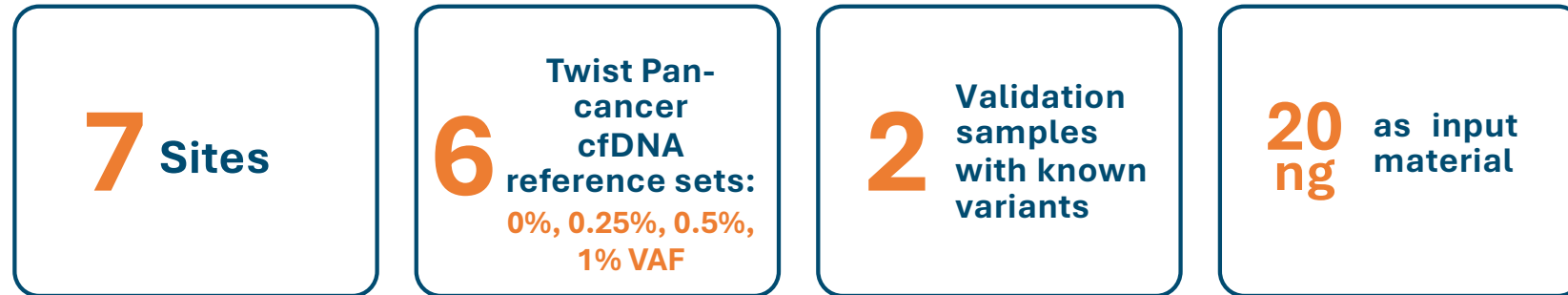
OncoKDM platform as a main user interface and reporting tool



4. Technical & clinical performance of OncoXPLORE



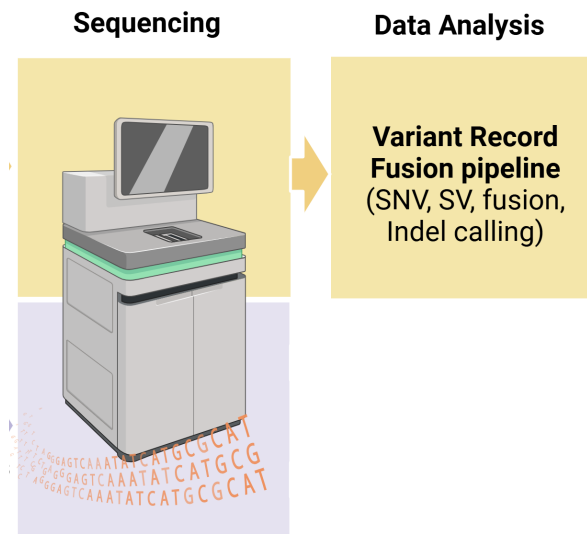
Multicentric technical validation



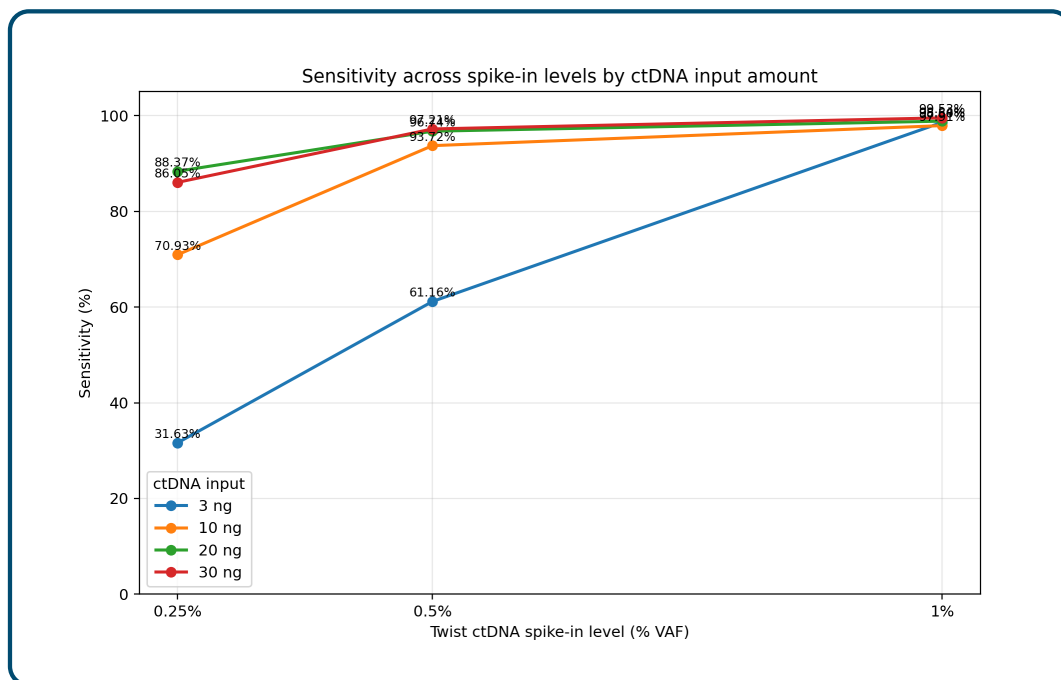
Variant class	N of variants
SNVs	220
InDel	203
SVs (Fusions)	5
Total	430

Twist Pan-cancer cfDNA reference variant overview

Targeted sequencing module



Performance characteristics for SNVs and InDels



Internal validation using Twist Pan-cancer cfDNA V2 Reference set

$\geq 96.7\%$ Sensitivity

For detection of SNVs/InDels at 0.5% VAF at 20-30 ng input

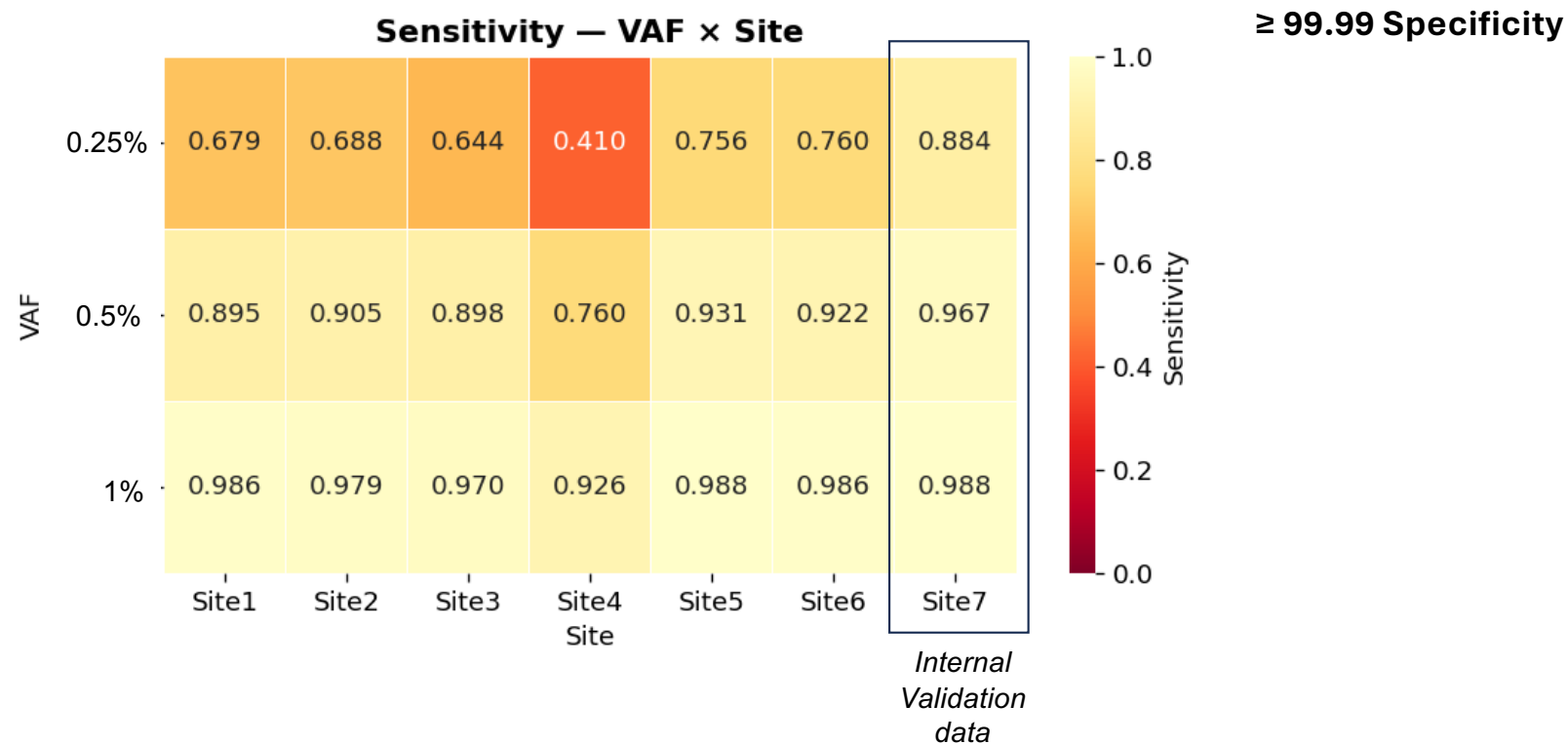
$\geq 99.99\%$ Specificity

For detection of SNVs/InDels across all tested inputs

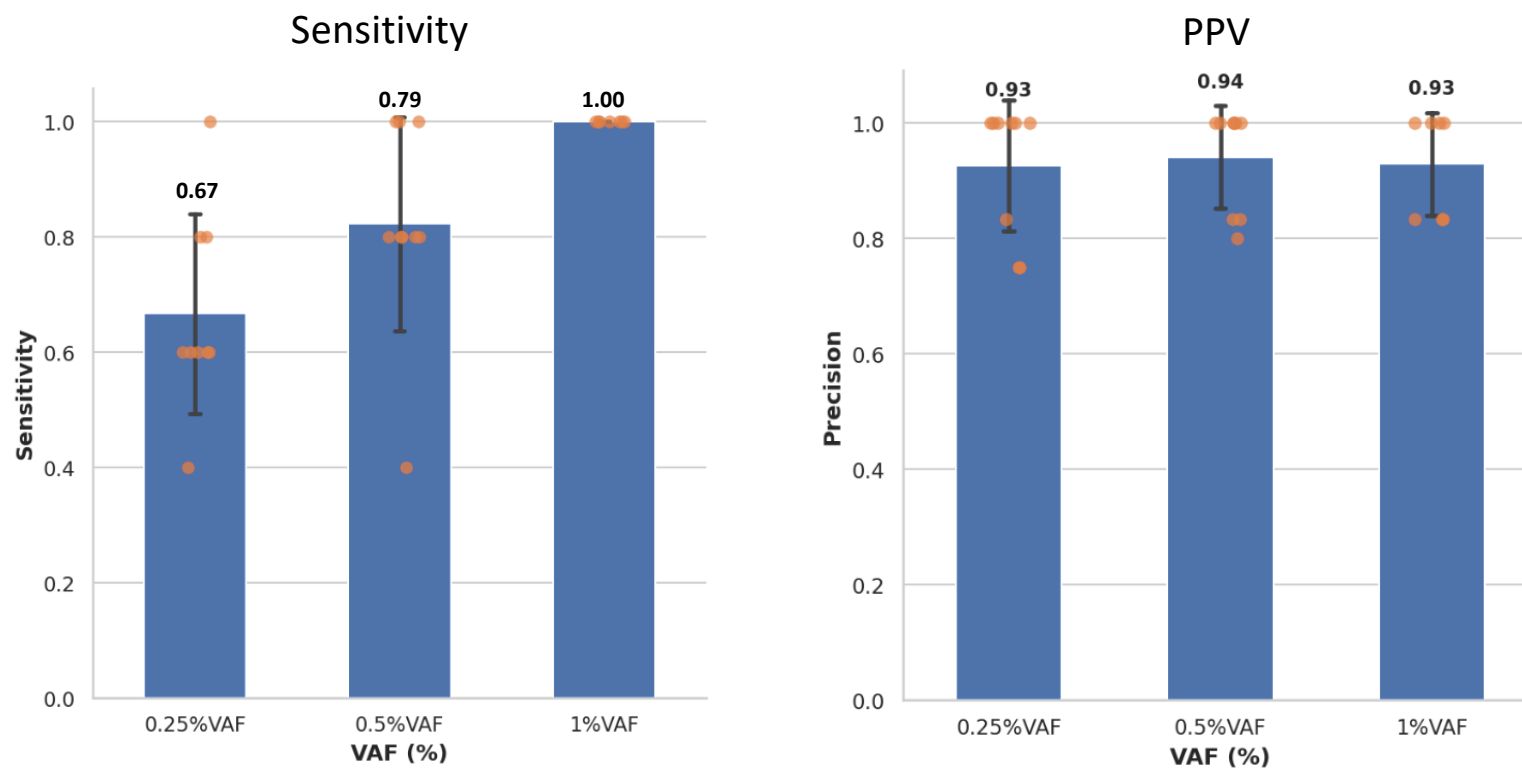
0.5% LoD

At $\geq 95\%$ sensitivity (LoD95) for detection of SNVs/Indels at 10-30 ng input

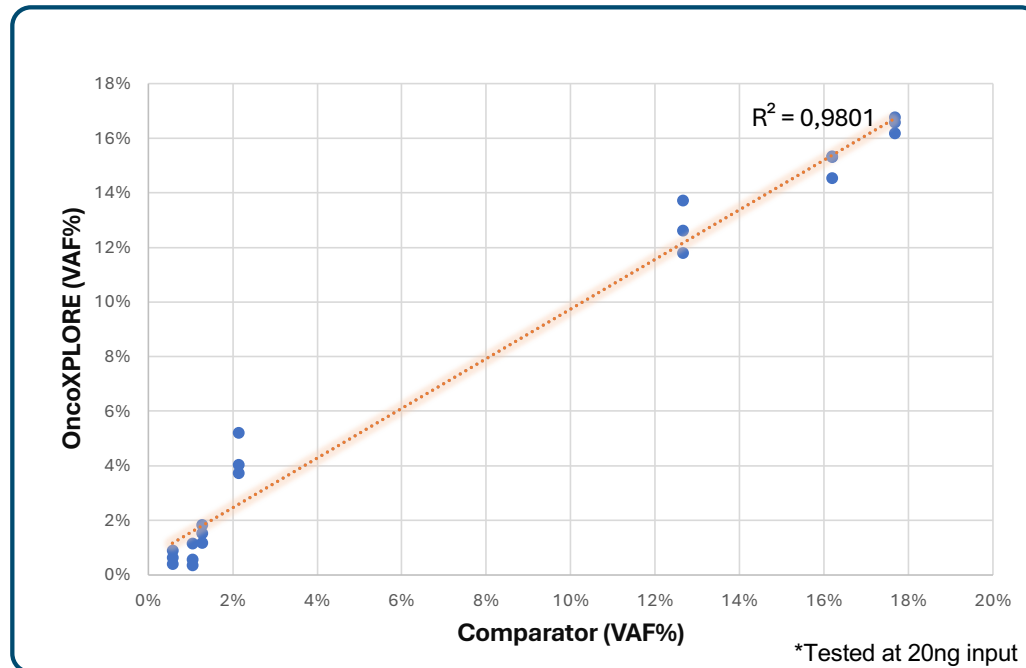
Multicentric validation for SNV/indel detection



Multicentric validation for fusion detection



High quantitative accuracy in variant allele frequency



100% Positive Percent Agreement (PPA)

For detection of known variants in validation samples

$R^2=0.98$ High quantitative accuracy

OncoXPLORE vs orthogonal liquid NGS comparator

Improved variant detection in clinical samples

OncNGS Phase 2

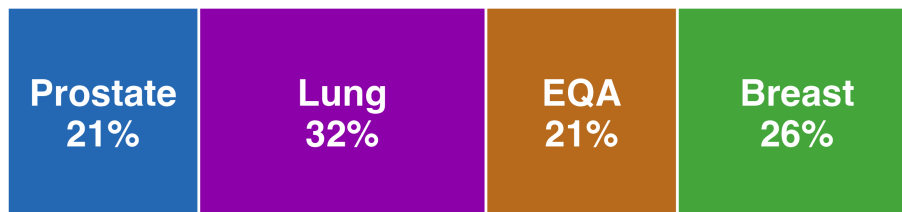


79% Concordance

26/33 SNVs & InDels



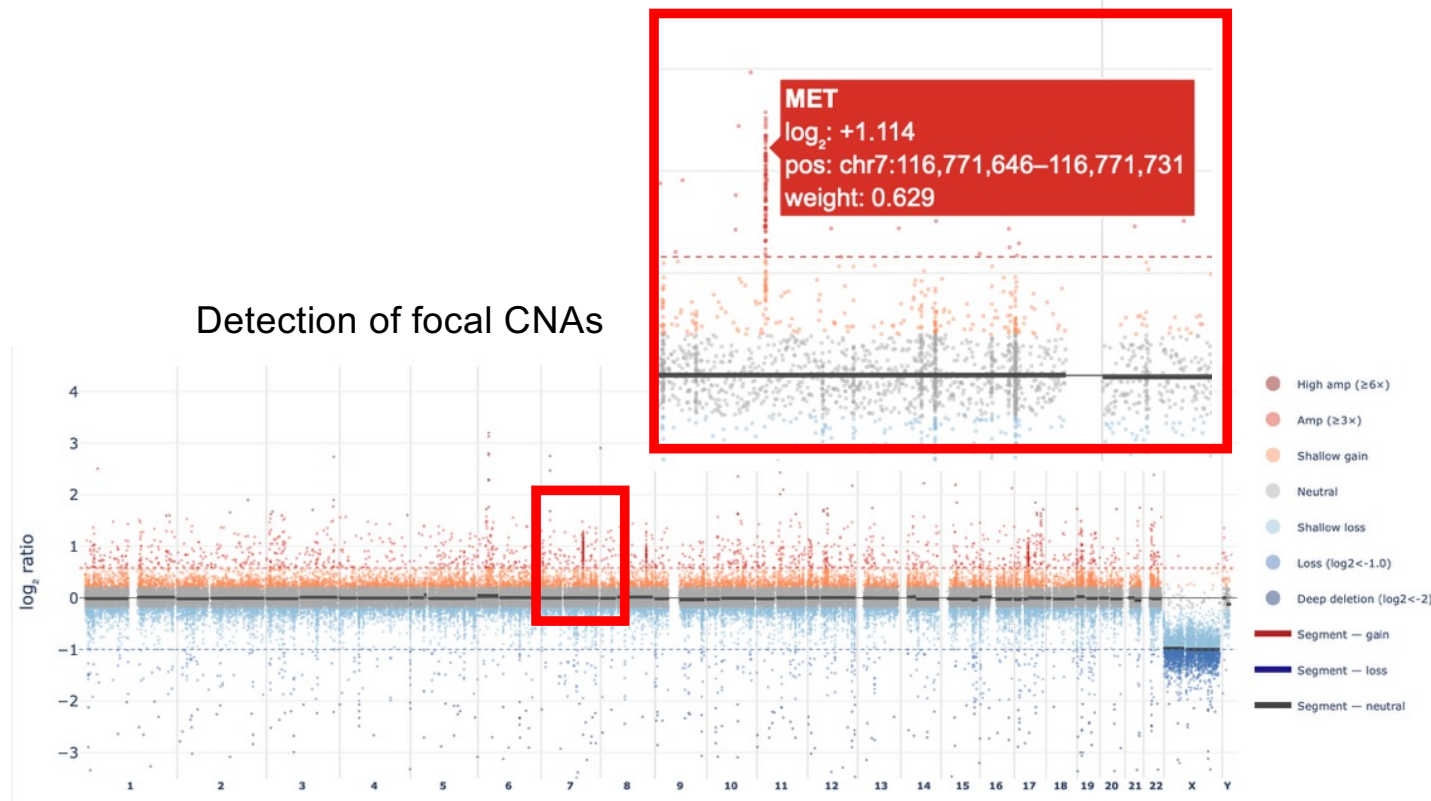
OncNGS Phase 3



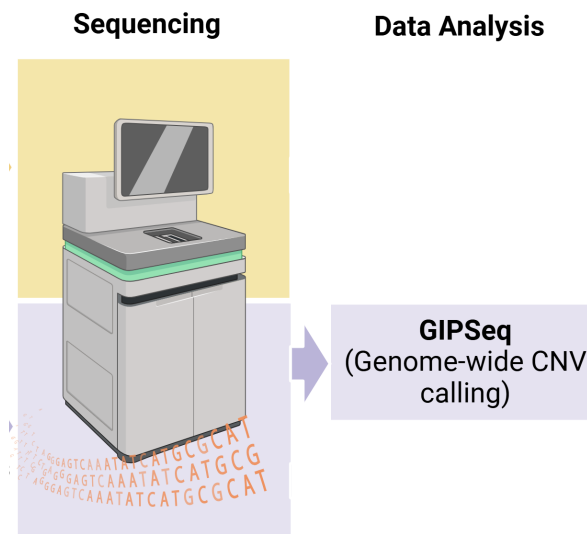
100% Concordance

42/42 SNVs & InDels

Genome-wide copy-number alterations (CNAs) from targeted data

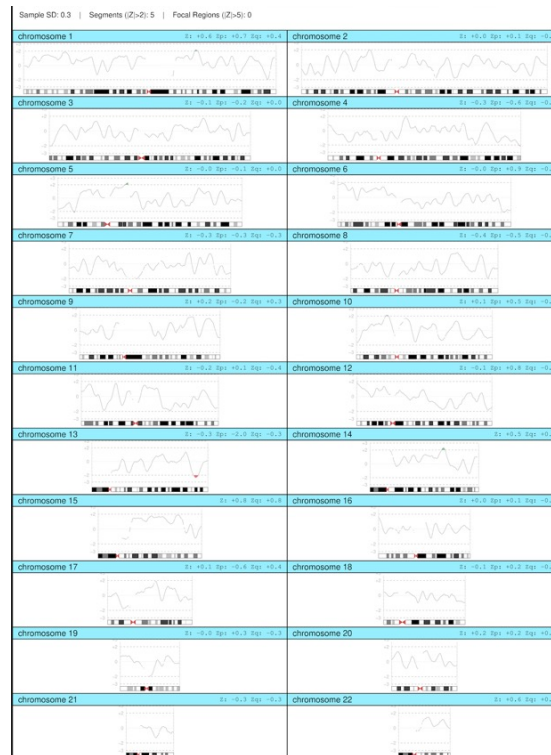


Low-pass whole genome sequencing module



Genome-wide copy number alterations (CNAs)

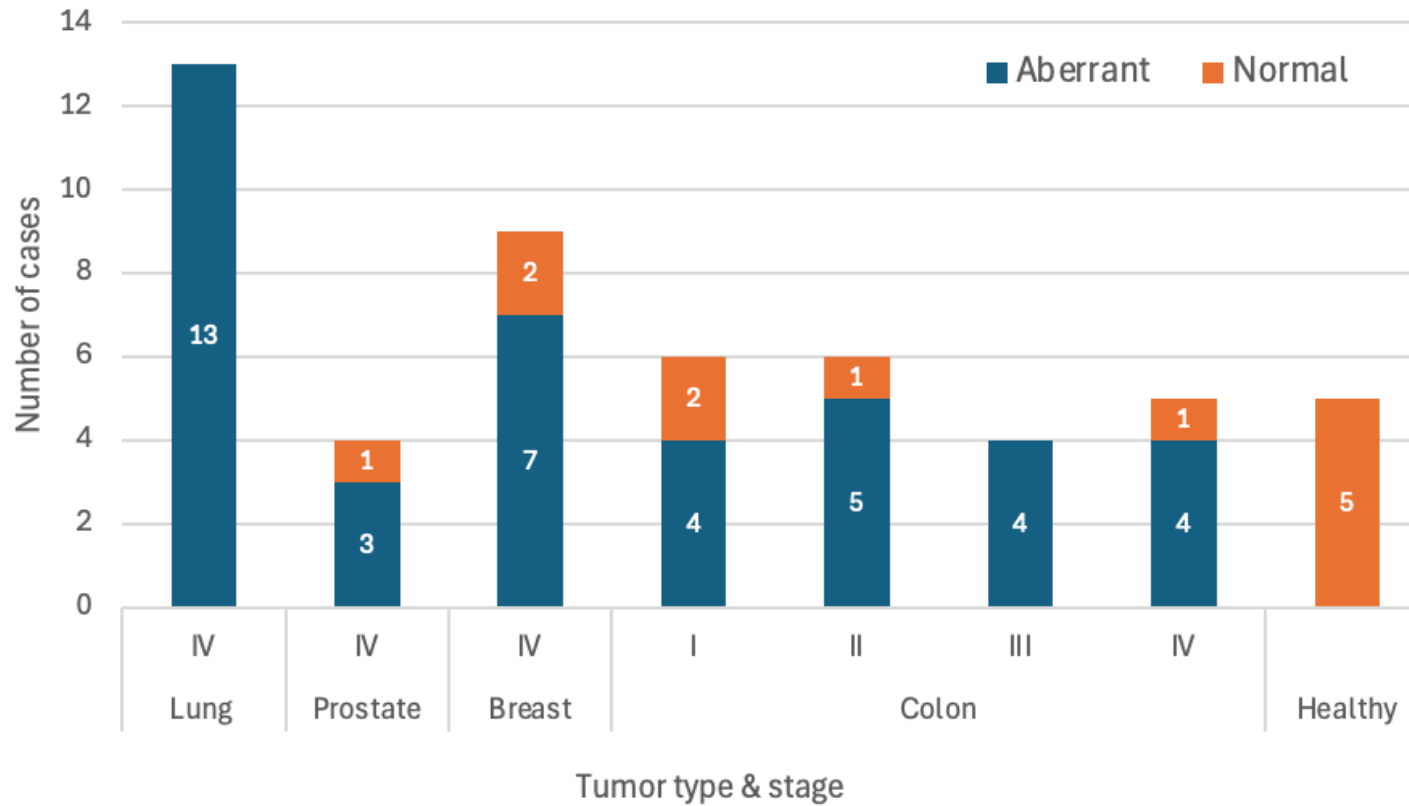
Normal profile



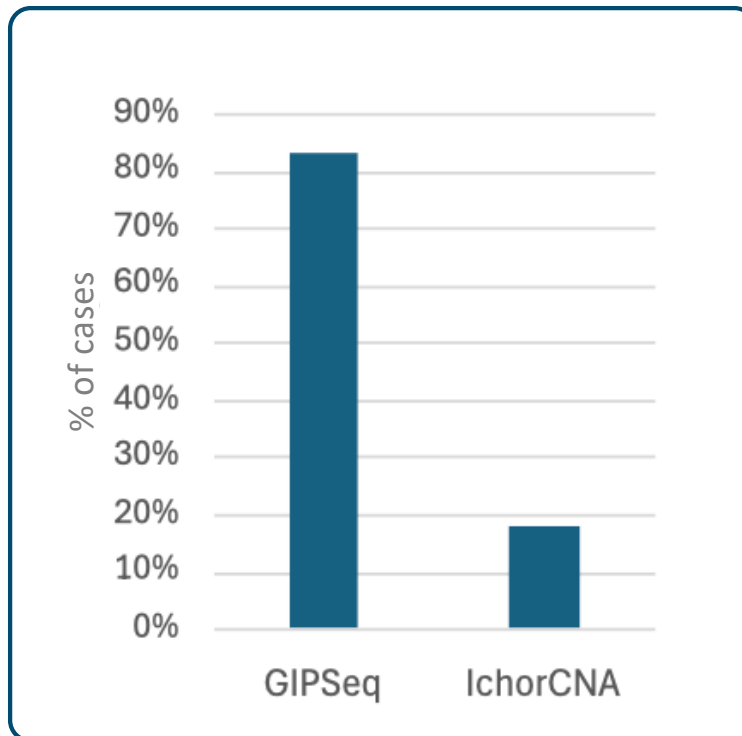
Cancer profile



Cancer signal detection with genome-wide CNA analyses



GIPSeq has a sensitivity well below 3% tumour fraction



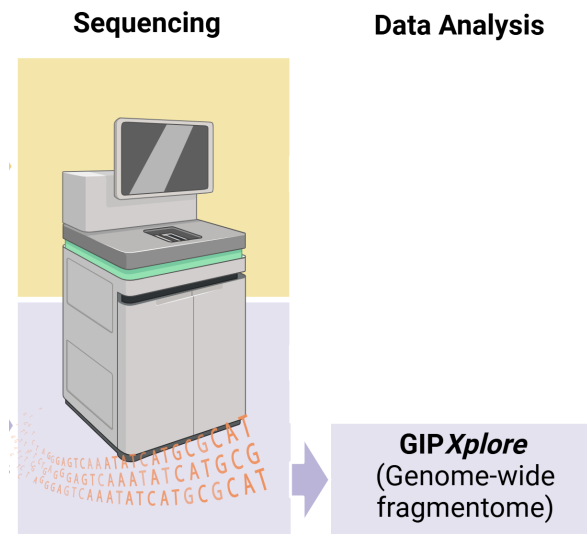
>80% Samples with detectable cancer signal

OncoXPLORE vs IchorCNA as comparator

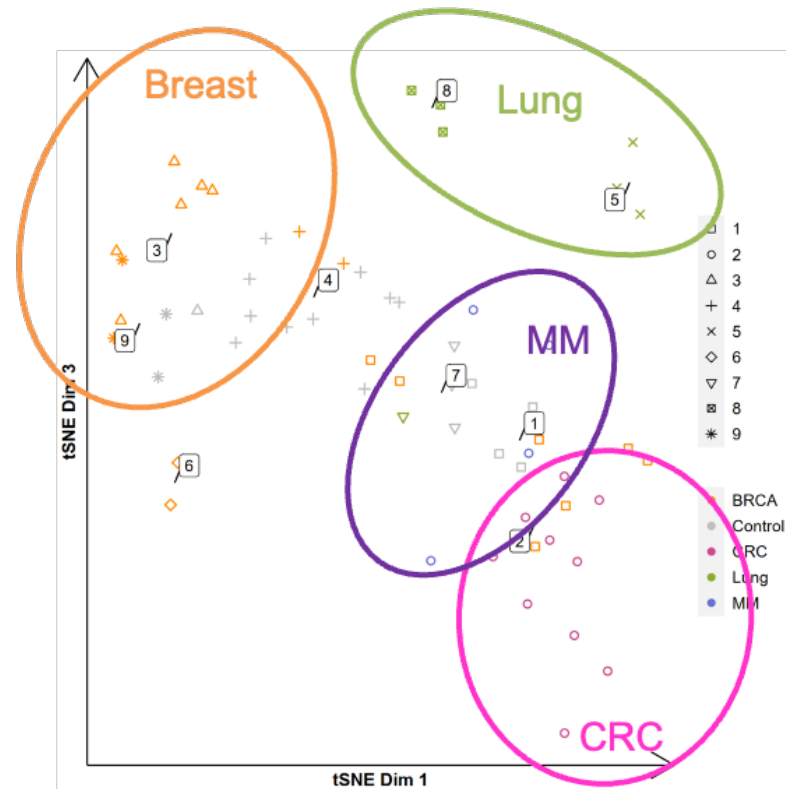
<3%TF Sensitive cancer signal detection

as estimated using IchorCNA

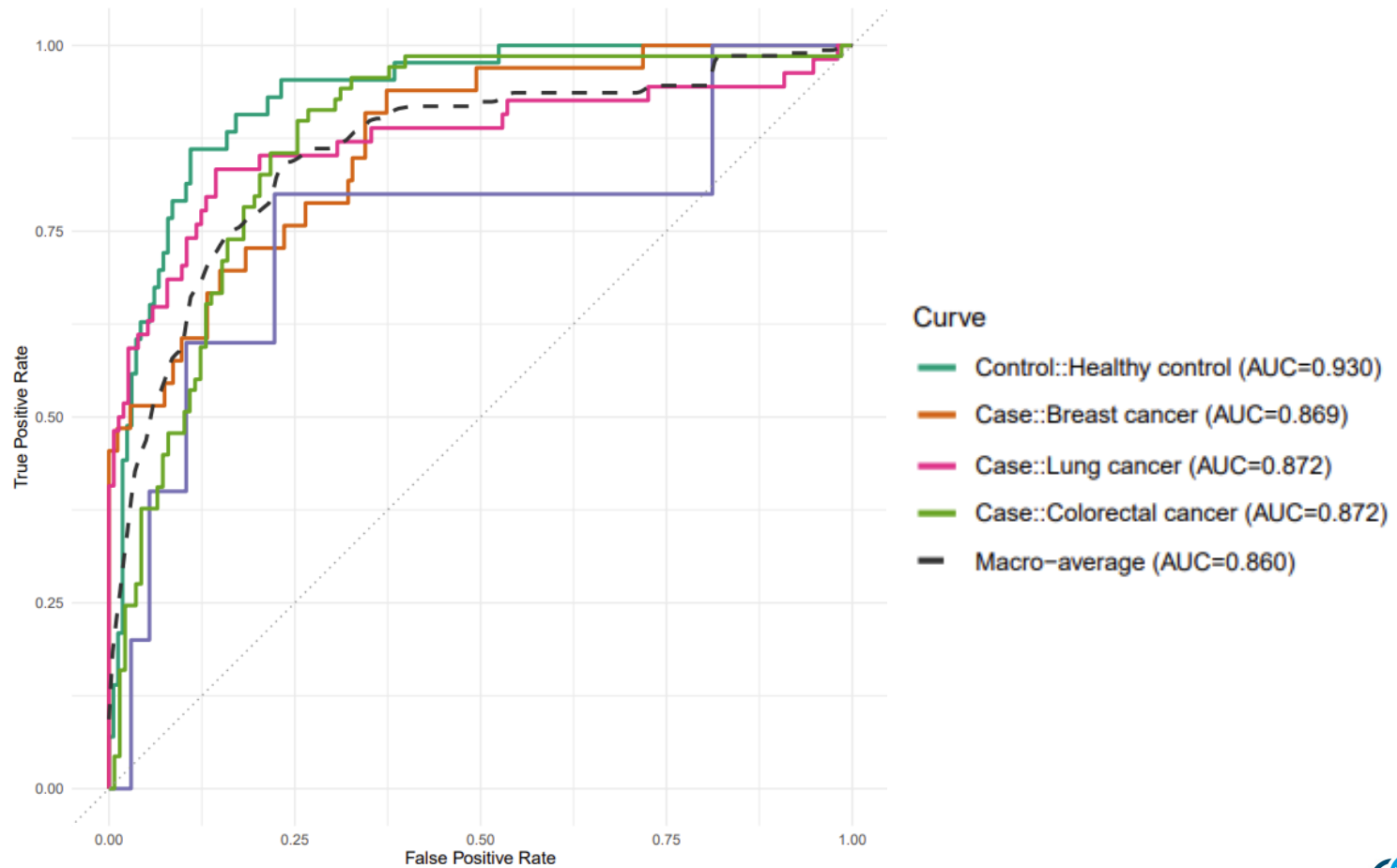
Low-pass whole genome sequencing module



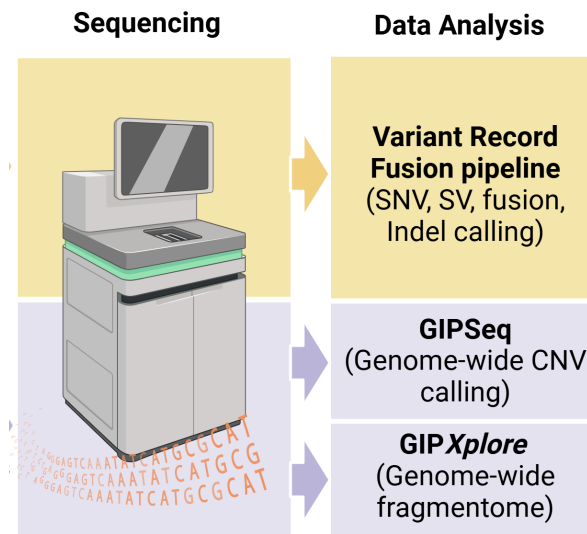
Multicentric evaluation of cfDNA fragmentome profiles (Phase 2)



Genome-wide cfDNA profiles carry cancer type-specific patterns



OncoXPLORE solution: Integrating all the data



OncoXPLORE comprehensive sample view

Targeted module:

Variant data:

ESR1 p.D538G
0.72% VAF

Fusions:

No actionable SVs found

MSI status:

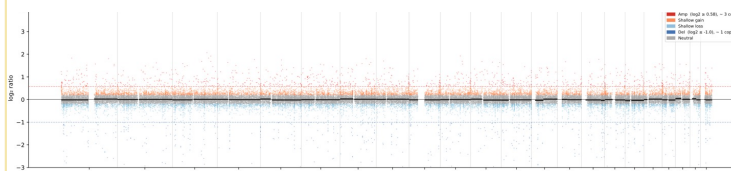
Stable

(b)TMB score:

6.0 Mut/Mb

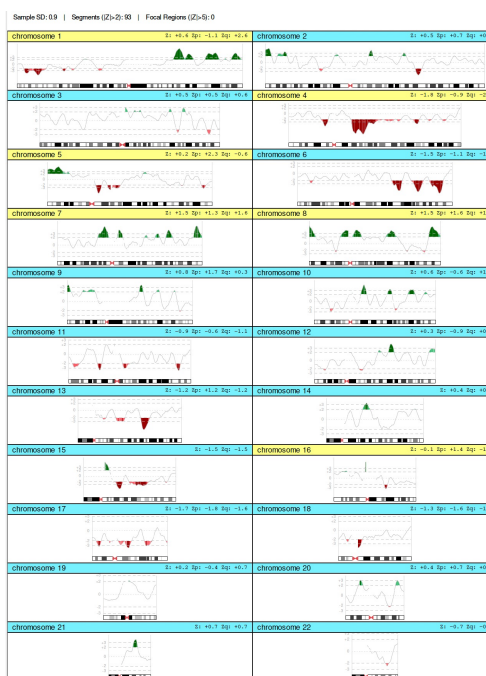
CNAs:

-



Low-pass WGS module:

Genome-wide CNA profile



Fragmentome-based site-of-origin prediction

Case vs control

Tumor type

Case

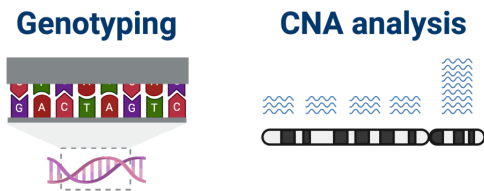
Breast cancer



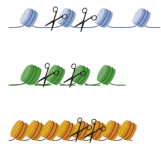
5. Perspectives for future research



Multimodal testing



Fragmentomics



Cancer screening

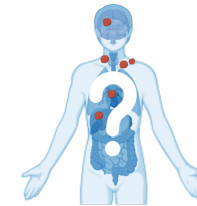


with or without

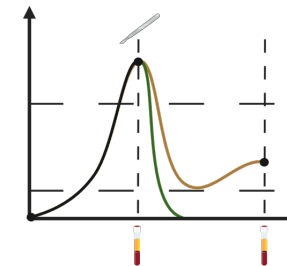
Tissue biopsy



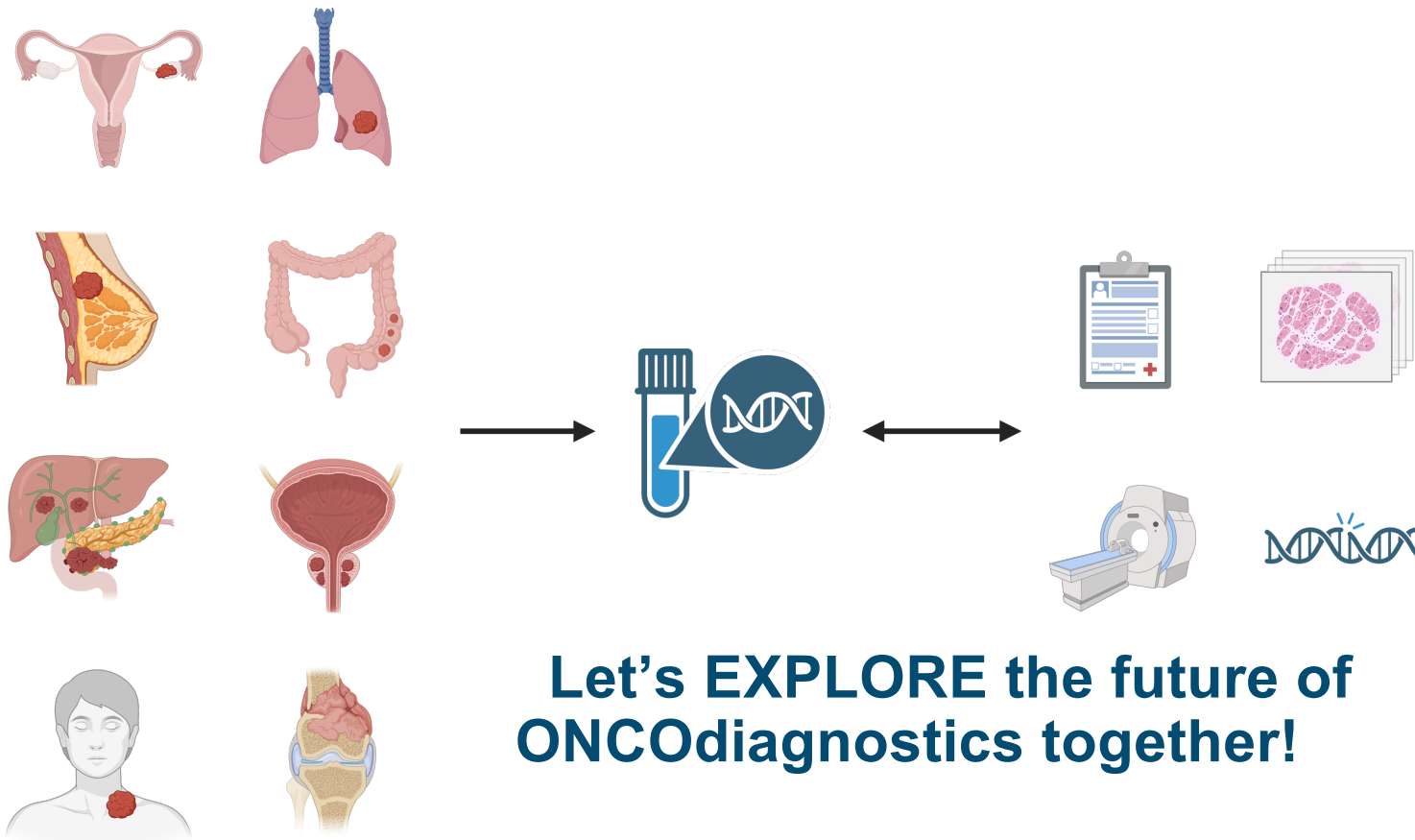
Cancer of unknown primary (CUP)



Minimal residual disease (MRD)



Need for further clinical validation to increase knowledge about fragmentome profiles in multiple tumor types



Let's **EXPLORE** the future of **ONCOdiagnostics** together!

Let's EXPLORE the future of ONCOdiagnostics together!



- **OncoXPLORE** is able to detect actionable alterations with **high sensitivity in clinical use cases** with unmet diagnostic needs
- **Cost-effective, scalable and fast** (<7 TAT) off-the shelf solution
- **(Epi)genomics** improves cancer signal detection and profiling
- **Need for further clinical validation and collaboration** to increase knowledge about (epi)genomic profiles in multiple tumor types

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Acknowledgments

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Nicolas Dierckxsens

Center for Human
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*Laboratory for acquired
genetics in solid tumours*

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Sara Vander Borght

Genomics Core

Wouter Bossuyt

Stefan Lehnert

KU LEUVEN



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