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# Impact

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THANKING THOSE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## Edward P. Evans Foundation \$5 million gift creates center and chair for myelodysplastic syndromes

**D**ana-Farber has deep research and clinical expertise in myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), a family of diseases in which the bone marrow produces an insufficient supply of healthy blood cells. Now, a \$5 million gift from the Edward P. Evans Foundation, the largest to MDS in Dana-Farber history, will create the Edward P. Evans Center for Myelodysplastic Syndromes to promote collaborative research aimed at treating, preventing, and ultimately curing MDS. The gift also endows the Edward P. Evans Chair in MDS Research.

“The Edward P. Evans Center for MDS will be a nexus for discoveries in MDS and improvements in patient care that will help reduce the global burden of this disease,” said Dana-Farber President and CEO Laurie H. Glimcher, MD. “As the only institution with both research and clinical expertise spanning the entire spectrum of the MDS disease process, Dana-Farber is the ideal home for this center, where we can accelerate progress and honor the legacy of Mr. Evans.”

Under the auspices of the center, the gift provides a source of support for basic and clinical research to better understand, treat, and prevent MDS; funds a biannual seminar to promote the exchange of MDS-related information among scientists in the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center; and creates the Edward P. Evans Fellowship to support the training of promising postdoctoral physician-scientists at pivotal moments in their career.

Benjamin Ebert, MD, PhD, chair of Medical Oncology and the George P. Canellos, MD, and Jean S. Canellos Professor of Medicine, will serve as the center’s scientific director. David Steensma, MD, will serve as the center’s clinical research director, and has also been named the first Edward P. Evans Chair in MDS Research.

MDS arises in myeloid tissue, the portion of the bone marrow that contains developing and mature red blood cells, certain kinds of infection-fighting white blood cells, and cells that form platelets for clotting. In certain cases, MDS transforms into acute myeloid leukemia.

Dana-Farber investigators have a long track record of major advances in MDS, including leadership of a clinical trial that led to Food and Drug Administration approval of decitabine, one of three drugs currently approved to treat the disease; discovery of genetic predictors of outcomes in MDS; and development of the first MDS-specific quality-of-life assessment, QUALMS-1, which is being used to measure patient-reported outcomes in numerous clinical trials.

Edward P. Evans was chairman and CEO of various companies, including MacMillan Inc., as well as a philanthropist and accomplished horseman. Frustrated by the siloed nature of MDS treatment and research, he established the foundation to invest in transformative, collaborative research aimed at treating, preventing, and curing MDS. Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center has been a frequent beneficiary of the foundation’s



The foundation established by Edward P. Evans recently made a transformative gift to establish a center and chair for MDS research at Dana-Farber.

Discovery Research Grants and Edward P. Evans Fellowship grants.

“Dana-Farber is the ideal location for our newest Edward P. Evans Center for Myelodysplastic Syndromes, part of the foundation’s next phase in progressing the field forward,” said Michael D. Lewis, PhD, president of the foundation. “The new center capitalizes on Dana-Farber’s world-renowned faculty, access to patients, and relationship with preeminent Boston-area research organizations. We eagerly anticipate the flow of new discoveries that will benefit MDS patients.” ■