



Nicco Fans Club Association Onlus sustains and finances, since April 2014, the Progetto Adolescenti (Adolescents' Project) of the Meyer Paediatric Hospital in Florence with an investment over 3 years for a total amount of 300.000 Euro.

In addition to this, the association has pledged to purchase the machinery necessary to the bone marrow transplant centre of the same hospital and sustains and finances families with economic difficulties whose children are hospitalised at the Meyer. The Association has also recently guaranteed 30.000 Euro for the therapy needed for a child who has just arrived from Peru.

The contribution of TFWA Care is being used for the above projects, the main one being the "Adolescents' Project" illustrated briefly below:

THE PROJECT: the "Adolescent Project" aims to create, within the paediatric hospital, a dedicated unit for adolescents and young adults (from 14 years of age) with haematological/oncological illnesses. The team will be a multi-discipline team able to take global responsibility for the young people facing these illnesses, also with regards to the psychological and relationship-wise aspects areas which can have a devastating impact in this particular age group.

An important chapter of this project, to the cost of 50.000 euro, is the research. In particular, in collaboration with the University of Florence, the research will focus on mesenchymal stem cells (MSC) and aims and making these cells act as therapeutical agents with regards to the neoplastic cells themselves. In particular, MSC, due to their intrinsic characteristic of being pulled into the tumour, can be opportunely modified to transform them into real "Trojan Horses" and inducing them to release tumour killing molecules or they can be charged with antitumour drugs to be transmitted in close proximity to the tumorous cells ("mesenkiller cells").

The project is also aimed at curing tumours in adolescents and will be further developed as an alternative in the cases where the patient does not respond to traditional treatments by using a particular type of transplant called "aploidentical" which uses parents or semi compatible brothers and sisters as donors.

The teams (doctors, psychologists, nurses) who will be part of this project will be specially trained and the project will avail itself of the collaboration of international and national specialised centres such as, for example, the department of orthopaedic oncology in Careggi Hospital and creating new ones.

It is the very first time that a project like this will be carried out in a paediatric hospital in Italy.