Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Testing on Reference Specimens: an Italian Multicenter Experience

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Supplementary Figure 1: Cell lines pellet-derived nucleic acids quantifications and qualifications by using TapeStation 4200 platform (Agilent, Santa Clara, CA, USA).

Abbreviations: Conc. (*Concentration*); DIN (*DNA Integrity Number*); ng (*nanograms*); RINe (*RNA Integrity Number equivalent*) μl (*microliters*).



Supplementary Figure 2: DNA and RNA evaluation from cell block specimens of mixed enginereed cell lines performed at University of Naples Federico II by using TapeStation 4200 (Agilent, Santa Clara, CA, US) during validation step.

Abbreviations: Conc. (Concentration); DIN (DNA Integrity Number); ng (nanograms); RINe (RNA Integrity Number equivalent) µl (microliters).



Supplementary Figure 3A: NGS analysis on Cell Block n.1 performed at University Federico II in Naples by using Ion GeneStudio[™] S5 Plus System platform (Thermo Fisher Scientifics, Waltham, MA, US).

Abbreviations: EGFR (Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor); KRAS (Kirsten Rat Sarcoma Viral Oncogene Homologue); MET (MET proto-oncogene, receptor tyrosine kinase); ROS1 (c-Ros Oncogene 1); SLC34A2 (Solute Carrier Family 34 Member 2).



Supplementary Figure 3B: NGS analysis on Cell Block n.2 performed at University Federico II in Naples by using Genexus[™] platform (Thermo Fisher Scientifics, Waltham, MA, US).

Abbreviations: EGFR (Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor); KRAS (Kirsten Rat Sarcoma Viral Oncogene Homologue); MET (MET proto-oncogene, receptor tyrosine kinase); ROS1 (c-Ros Oncogene 1); SLC34A2 (Solute Carrier Family 34 Member 2).



Supplementary Table 1: Growth protocol and referral molecular alteration of commercially available cell lines selected for the study.

Cell line	Molecular Alteration	Complete Growth Medium	Origin
HCC827	EGFR DEL 19	RPMI-1640 Medium, Fetal	Human Non-Small Cell Lung
(H068)	E746 - A750 DELETION	Bovine Serum 10%	Cancer Cells
HCC78	ROS1	RPMI-1640 Medium, Fetal	Human Non-Small Cell Lung
	(FUSION)	Bovine Serum 10%	Cancer Cells
H358	KRAS G12C	RPMI-1640 Medium, Fetal	Human Non-Small Cell Lung
(H159)		Bovine Serum 10%	Cancer Cells
H596	MET Δ 14	RPMI-1640 Medium, Fetal Bovine Serum 10%	Human Lung adenosquamous carcinoma cell line

Abbreviations: EGFR (Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor); KRAS (Kirsten Rat Sarcoma Virus); MET (Mesenchymal Epithelial Transition factor); ROS1 (c-ros Oncogene 1).

Center ID	Mutation	MAF% or Ct		
1	PIK3CA p.E545K	16,9%		
2	PIK3CA p.E545K	5,5%		
	PIK3CA p.E545K	8,3%		
	EGFR p.S720A	5,4%		
5	TP53 p.G245C	12,2%		
	TP53 p.S241F	28,8%		
	TP53 p.V218del	62,7%		
	PIK3CA p.E545K	6,0%		
6	TP53 p.G245C	16,0%		
U	TP53 p.S241F	31,0%		
	TP53 p.V218del	54,0%		
7	PIK3CA p.E545K	8,5%		
Q	PIK3CA p.E545K	7,4% / 34,4 Ct		
0	TP53 p.V218del	61,4%		
	PIK3CA p.E545K	8 00/		
	TP53 p.G245C	8,0% 16.0%		
	TP53 p.S241F	10,0%		
10	TP53 p.V218del	20,0% 54.0%		
10	MRE11 p.S209F	24,0%		
	U2AF1 p.S34F	16.0%		
	NOTCH3	30.0%		
	p.D139N	50,070		
	PIK3CA p.E545K	13,8%		
11	TP53 p.G245C	13,7%		
	TP53 p.S241F	33,3%		
	TP53 p.V218del	48,6%		
12	PIK3CA p.E545K	20,3%		
15	PIK3CA p.E545K	7,1%		
16	PIK3CA p.E545K	27,0%		
17	PIK3CA p.E545K	19,5%		
18	PIK3CA p.E545K	8,0%		
19	PIK3CA p.E545K	21,7%		

Supplementary Table 2: Additional molecular alteration detected by each institution.

Abbreviations: Ct (Cycle threshold); MAF (Minor Allele Frequency); MRE11 (Meiotic recombination 11 homolog 1); NOTCH3 (Neurogenic locus notch homolog protein 3); PIK3CA (Phosphatidylinositol-4,5-bisphosphate 3-kinase catalytic subunit alpha); TP53 (Tumor Suppressor Protein p53); U2AF1 (U2 small nuclear RNA auxiliary factor 1).

Supplementary Material

Library preparation and Sequencing assays

cDNA libraries were made using the SQK-PCS109 cDNA-PCR Sequencing kit (Oxford Nanopore Technologies, UK) according to the manufacturer's protocol. In brief, 50 ng of a mixture of total RNA from two cell lines was denatured at 65 °C for 5 min for oligo-dT (VNP) hybridization, then reverse transcribed using the strand-switching protocol in 20 μ l of the reaction mixture as reported in the relevant cDNA-PCR sequencing kit protocol (version: PCS_9035_v109_revM, Oxford Nanopore Technologies, Oxford, UK). The reaction was incubated at 42 °C for 90 min then with cycles 1 cycle of (80 °C for 10 min) for enzyme inactivation. The double-stranded cDNA was split into four PCR reactions for which we used LongAmp-Taq 2x MasterMix (NEB) and cDNA primer (cPrim) for amplification incubating at 95 °C for 30 s followed by 20 cycles of (95 °C for 15s, 62 °C for 15s, 65 °C for 3min), with a final extension at 65 °C for 6 min. Purification steps were carried out following the manufacturer's instructions by Exonuclease I digestion and affinity purification by AMPure XP beads (Agencourt, Beckman Coulter, Beverly, USA). The purified library was quantified by fluorometric quantitation and 200 fmol was used in the reaction of adapter addition. Then library was mixed with library loading beads and running buffer with fuel mix provided in ONT protocol. The full-length cDNA library was then sequenced on a MinION R9.5 flow cells for 24 h using the High accuracy (HAC) sequencing protocol.

Data analysis

Primary data acquisition and FAST5 files production was performed by MinKNOW, the operating software that drives nanopore sequencing devices. Then secondary analysis and FASTQ files production was performed on a Google Colabs remote server by Guppy using two different basecaller modes: high

speed (fast) and high accuracy (sup). The obtained reads, as reported in tab.1, were used as long-sequencing reads (LR-seq) for downstream analyses.

LR-seq data was aligned to the human GRCh38.p13 reference genome using minimap2 in spliced mode (-x splice). For more accurate spliced alignment GENCODE v36 reference annotation was also provided to minimap2 as input. Resulting alignments were processed with two different fusion discovery methods: LongGF and JAFFAL. In both tools the same GENCODE v36 annotation was used. Additionally, we applied a direct target approach by creating fusion transcripts for the specific known fusion genes from FusionGDB and aligning LR-seq reads with minimap2 in non-spliced mode (-x map-ont).

Results and Discussion

To benchmark and evaluate the possibility of using low-coverage ONT-Nanopore long-read sequencing to detect SVs in different cell types we tested standard full-length PCR cDNA long sequencing assay in two cell lines: lung cancer (NCI-H596) and breast cancer (MCF7). A mixture of total RNA from the above cell lines was sequenced by the Nanopore PCR full-length cDNA protocol and sequencing data was used to search structural variation (SV) by two bioinformatic pipelines LongGF, Jaffal and in the target search approach by MiniMap2. From the ONT-Nanopore sequencing run, we obtain a total of 6,917,552 reads base-called by high speed (FAST) and 6,216,200 reads in super-accuracy (SUP) mode with an average reading length of 700 bp and percentage of reads mapping against GRCh38.p13.genome of 79.95% in the super-accuracy data-set (see Table 1). Selecting only fusion genes arose by gene-gene pairs and supported at least by two long reads, our analysis provided a list of 25 fusion gene candidates by Jaffal and 28 by LongGF (see table 2). Among them, six fusion gene candidates are in common between both pipelines as reported in table 3. Due to the lack of a fully validated gene fusion dataset in

these two cell lines, we have used data from the wide bibliography where frequently are reported discordant data about fusion genes detected. To this end, we identified for MCF7 a set of four fusions previously described as reported in table 4, in our data we can confirm RPS6KB1-VMP1and AC099850.1-VMP1 fusion genes on the other hand we did not find any fusion occurrence about the other three genes couples. About (NCI-H596) cell line all data present in the literature agree with the presence of MET Exon 14 Skipping11 in our data we have 68 reads mapping on Met genes by MiniMap2 and four reads cover the exon 14 region where two reads show exon 14 skipping fig.1. Moreover, this modification was confirmed manually by MiniMap2 and by IsoQuant a tool to identify isoforms from long-read RNA sequencing.

Latest Next Generation Sequencing technologies opened the way to a novel era of genomic studies, allowing us to gain novel insights into multifactorial pathologies such as cancer. In particular, gene fusion detection and comprehension have been deeply enhanced by these methods. Indeed the possibility of third-generation sequencing to overcome all limitations of the high fragmentation of the secondgeneration NGS-based approach is crucial to resolve long repeats and highlight candidate genes fusion. The accurate and timely detection of tumour-associated SVs can make a difference in the early treatments and for molecular monitoring of disease relapse, as well as determining or predicting patient chemoresponse. Tumour-associated SVs are hardly revealed when they occur in repetitive regions, which account for over half of the human genome. The ability of long-read 3rd-generation sequencing methods, such as ONT-Nanopore, to read through repetitive regions could make it an ideal tool for detecting tumour-associated SVs. This work serves as proof of principle, showing the ability of this sequencing approach to correctly and reliably detect SVs with only hundreds, instead of millions of reads. Moreover, ONT-Nanopore technology has attracted much attention due to the portability and low cost of this novel sequencing instrument, indeed the cost per device is approximately $1,000 \in$ and the small size, like a USB pen, of the MinION nanopore sequencing instrument, offers accessibility to testing in nearly any setting. In contrast, the instrumentation for 2nd generation methods requires a substantial upfront investment greater than 100,000 \in and sufficient lab space for their large footprint, which are prohibitive to many research and clinical labs. We have designed, developed, and verified an mRNA-Seq assay that can be potentially extended to detect gene fusions in tumour specimens. This test in the target approach could be used clinically to aid in diagnosis and to guide targeted therapy decisions for patients with solid and hematologic tumours. The main limitations that probably can restrict the utility of ONT-Nanopore sequencing in clinical testing is a relatively high mismatch and indel error rate but this factor is in rapid improvement.

Candidate fusion genes highlighted in the above cell lines show some differences in fusion reported in the literature, for which frequently contrasting data are reported about the genomic characterization of cancer cell lines. As regards to NCI-H596 cell line, in agreement with literature data, our approach confirmed the identification of Exon 14 skipping in the Met gene. On the other hand, for MCF-7 cell line almost 30,000 articles can be retrieved in PubMed indicating a low level of reproducibility probably as a result of biological variation and different technical approaches used, but the most of studies take into account mainly the technical aspect overlooking the biological bias. Indeed, only few studies highlighted how genomic instability that characterizes cancer cell lines can produce an effect on over-cultured, genomic and epigenetic modification. As a consequence, the genetic heterogeneity in cancer cell lines leads to varying patterns of gene expression as a result of positive clonal selection that is highly sensitive to culture conditions. In other words, much evidence showed that prolonged cell culture is more likely to induce the occurrence of secondary genomic changes, such as copy number variations as well as transcriptomic drifts. This process may have occurred in the cell lines analyzed in the present study and can explain the discrepancy to literature data. Not even STR cell authentication techniques would ensure that "their sub-clone" will behave with sufficient stability and reproducibility, even in case the starting material is a single batch of cells from a cell bank, limiting the number of passages and cell authentication by short tandem repeat markers (STR). Indeed, in some reports gene expression patterns suggested that MCF-7 cells of the same batch from a cell bank include subpopulations with different genomic backgrounds. Cancer cell lines are a powerful tool for cancer research and as reference material to use in tests validation interlaboratory programs, but their genomic evolution leads to a high degree of variation across cell line strains and generations, which must be considered in experimental design and is mandatory a multi approaching technique in genomic characterization of the starting reference control specimens.

Supplementary Table 3: Full-length cDNA long Sequencing results using FAST or SUP Guppy basecalling mode.

			Percentage Mapped	Average Reading Length
	Total number reads	Mapped	(%)	(bp)
Fast	6,917,552	5,171,856	74.76	671
Sup	6,216,200	4,970,122	79.95	716

Supplementary Table 4: fusion analysis results from Jafall and LongGF application.

Abbreviations: ANXA2 (Annexin A2); ATP1A1 (ATPase Na+/K+ Transporting Subunit Alpha 1); AXL (AXL Receptor Tyrosine Kinase); CALM2 (Calmodulin 2); CASKIN2 (CASK Interacting Protein 2); CBX3 (Chromobox 3); CCDC170 (Coiled-Coil Domain Containing 170); CCDC32 (Coiled-Coil Domain Containing 32); CDC5L (Cell Division Cycle 5 Like); CPNE3 (Copine 3); CRTAP (Cartilage Associated Protein); DDX27 (DEAD-Box Helicase 27); EIF6 (Eukaryotic Translation Initiation Factor 6); ESR1 (Estrogen Receptor 1); F3 (Coagulation Factor III); FKBP14 (FKBP Prolyl Isomerase 14); GNL3L (G Protein Nucleolar 3 Like); HIF1A (Hypoxia Inducible Factor 1 Subunit Alpha); HRH1 (Histamine Receptor H1); IFT52 (Intraflagellar Transport 52); KIAA0319L (Dyslexia-Associated Protein KIAA0319-Like); LAMTOR2 (Late Endosomal/Lysosomal Adaptor, MAPK And MTOR Activator 2); LSG1 (Large 60S Subunit Nuclear Export GTPase 1); LYRM2 (LYR Motif Containing 2); MAPRE1 (Microtubule Associated Protein RP/EB Family Member 1); MATN2 (Matrilin 2); MT-ATP6 (Mitochondrially Encoded ATP Synthase Membrane Subunit 6); MT-CO3 (Mitochondrially Encoded Cytochrome C Oxidase III); MT-CYB (Mitochondrially Encoded Cytochrome B); MT-ND4 (Mitochondrially Encoded NADH: Ubiquinone *Oxidoreductase* Core Subunit 4); MT-ND5 NADH:Ubiquinone *Oxidoreductase* (*Mitochondrially* Encoded Core Subunit 5); MT-ND6 (Mitochondrially Encoded NADH: Ubiquinone Oxidoreductase Core Subunit 6); NBEAL1 (Neurobeachin Like 1); NDUFA4 (NDUFA4 Mitochondrial Complex Associated); NSA2 (NSA2 Ribosome Biogenesis Factor); ORC6 (Origin Recognition Complex Subunit 6); PAIP2 (Poly(A) Binding Protein Interacting Protein 2); PHF14 (PHD Finger Protein 14); POP1 (POP1 Homolog, Ribonuclease P/MRP Subunit); PTBP2 (Polypyrimidine Tract Binding Protein 2); QRSL1 (Glutaminyl-TRNA Amidotransferase Subunit QRSL1); RP11 (Pre-MRNA Processing Factor 31); RPL12 (Ribosomal Protein L12); RPL30 (Ribosomal Protein L30); RPS6KB1 (Ribosomal Protein S6 Kinase B1); S100A11 (S100 Calcium Binding Protein A11); S100A6 (S100 Calcium Binding Protein A6); SPIN1 (Spindlin 1); SPTLC1 (Serine Palmitovltransferase Long Chain Base Subunit 1); SRSF9 (Serine And Arginine Rich Splicing Factor 9); SSBP4 (Single Stranded DNA Binding Protein 4); SSR2 (Signal Sequence Receptor Subunit 2); SUPT3H (SPT3 Homolog, SAGA And STAGA Complex Component); TMSB4X (Thymosin Beta 4 X-Linked); VMP1 (Vacuole Membrane Protein 1); WWP1 (WW Domain Containing E3 Ubiquitin Protein Ligase 1): YWHAE (Tyrosine 3-Monooxygenase/Tryptophan 5-Monooxygenase Activation Protein Epsilon); ZFP64 (ZFP64 Zinc Finger Protein); ZNF616 (Zinc Finger Protein 616).

	LongGF		JAFFAL				
Genes	Supporting reads	Left Right		Genes	Supporting reads	Left	Right
	number	Breakpoint	Breakpoint		number	Breakpoint	Breakpoint
DDX27:EIF6	29	chr20:49219 540	chr20:352801 17	AC099850.1:VMP1	42	chr17:59107 591	chr17:598382 95
NBEAL1:RPL1 2	11	chr2:203190 798	chr9:1274514 03	DDX27:EIF6	27	chr20:49219 541	chr20:352801 18
ESR1:CCDC17 0	8	chr6:151702 004	chr6:1515731 71	ESR1:CCDC170	8	chr6:151702 005	chr6:1515731 74
MT-ATP6:MT- CO3	7	chrM:8857	chrM:9551	POP1:MATN2	7	chr8:981173 90	chr8:9803046 2
ZFP64:ATP1A 1	2	chr20:52052 133	chr1:1163967 34	SPTLC1:RP11-27K13.3	5	chr9:920800 16	chr1:1170503 34
VMP1:IFT52	2	chr17:59839 998	chr20:435947 54	RPS6KB1:VMP1	2	chr17:59910 611	chr17:598382 95
VMP1:RPS6K B1	2	chr17:59838 294	chr17:599106 10	NDUFA4:PHF14	2	chr7:109400 16	chr7:1111135 0
LYRM2:AL139 353.1	2	chr6:896369 05	chr14:314276 11	RP11-96H19.1:RP11- 446N19.1	2	chr12:46387 972	chr12:466523 90
CPNE3:WWP1	2	chr8:865611 23	chr8:8643545 1	YWHAE:ANXA2	2	chr17:14000 47	chr15:603645 23
CDC5L:SUPT3 H	2	chr6:444456 58	chr6:4536519 9	HRH1:PAIP2	2	chr3:111373 99	chr5:1393637 59
MAPRE1:MT- CYB	2	chr20:32848 998	chrM:14746	SPTLC1:RP11-27K13.3	2	chr9:920800 16	chr1:1170323 36
FKBP14:AXL	2	chr7:300138 53	chr19:412605 89	ATP1A1:ZFP64	2	chr1:116396 734	chr20:520521 32
PHF14:NDUFA 4	2	chr7:111113 49	chr7:1094001 3	HIF1A-AS2:SRSF9	2	chr14:61750 885	chr12:120464 122
SPIN1:S100A6	2	chr9:884773 42	chr1:1535346 26	PTBP2:C8orf76	2	chr1:967515 00	chr8:1232317 57
LAMTOR2:SS R2	2	chr1:156055 671	chr1:1560164 83	AC099850.1:VMP1	8	chr17:59107 503	chr17:598382 95
PTBP2:C8orf76	2	chr1:967515 00	chr8:1232317 56	AC099850.1:VMP1	2	chr17:59118 046	chr17:598382 93
PAIP2:HRH1	2	chr5:139363 757	chr3:1113739 8	AC099850.1:VMP1	2	chr17:59107 327	chr17:598382 95
CBX3:CCDC32	2	chr7:262017 66	chr15:405627 70	\$100A6:SPIN1	2	chr1:153534 641	chr9:8847735 8
GNL3L:NSA2	2	chrX:54561 059	chr5:7476896 3	C9orf78:CRTAP	2	chr9:129828 113	chr3:3314294 8
QRSL1:AXL	2	chr6:106640 383	chr19:412605 04	C15orf57:CBX3	2	chr15:40562 772	chr7:2620176 9
C9orf78:CRTA P	2	chr9:129828 106	chr3:3314294 0	SSBP4:ORC6	2	chr19:18434 406	chr16:466982 21
KIAA0319L:M T-ND4	2	chr1:354499 48	chrM:11221	F3:LSG1	2	chr1:945301 50	chr3:1946416 20
CALM2:MT- ATP6	2	chr2:471765 10	chrM:8778	IFT52:VMP1	2	chr20:43594 751	chr17:598400 02
RPL30:ZNF616	2	chr8:980418 52	chr19:521239 18	QRSL1:AXL	2	chr6:106640 375	chr19:412605 13
S100A11:TMS B4X	2	chr1:152032 628	chrX:1297698 8	FKBP14:AXL	2	chr7:300138 58	chr19:412605 95
CASKIN2:MT- ND4	2	chr17:75503 963	chrM:11229				
MT-ND6:MT- ND5	2	chrM:14414	chrM:13843				
LSG1:F3	2	chr3:194641 628	chr1:9453014 1				

Supplementary Table 5: Common fusion genes found by Jaffal and LongGF.

Abbreviations: AXL (AXL Receptor Tyrosine Kinase); CCDC170 (Coiled-Coil Domain Containing 170); CRTAP (Cartilage Associated Protein); DDX27 (DEAD-Box Helicase 27); EIF6 (Eukaryotic Translation Initiation Factor 6); ESR1 (Estrogen Receptor 1); FKBP14 (FKBP Prolyl Isomerase 14); PTBP2 (Polypyrimidine Tract Binding Protein 2); QRSL1 (Glutaminyl-TRNA Amidotransferase Subunit QRSL1).

	1	LongGF		JAFFAL			
Genes	Supporting reads number	Left Breakpoint	Right Breakpoint	Supporting reads number	Left Breakpoint	Right Breakpoint	
DDX27:EIF6	29	chr20:49219540	chr20:35280117	27	chr20:49219541	chr20:35280118	
ESR1:CCDC170	8	chr6:151702004	chr6:151573171	8	chr6:151702005	chr6:151573174	
PTBP2:C8orf76	2	chr1:96751500	chr8:123231756	2	chr1:96751500	chr8:123231757	
C9orf78:CRTAP	2	chr9:129828106	chr3:33142940	2	chr9:129828113	chr3:33142948	
QRSL1:AXL	2	chr6:106640383	chr19:41260504	2	chr6:106640375	chr19:41260513	
FKBP14:AXL	2	chr7:30013853	chr19:41260589	2	chr7:30013858	chr19:41260595	

Supplementary Table 6: fusion genes reported in MCF7 and verify in our data.

Abbreviations: ARFGEF2 (ADP Ribosylation Factor Guanine Nucleotide Exchange Factor 2); BCAS3 (BCAS3 Microtubule Associated Cell Migration Factor); BCAS4 (Breast Carcinoma Amplified Sequence 4); CARM1 (Coactivator Associated Arginine Methyltransferase 1); RPS6KB1 (Ribosomal Protein S6 Kinase B1); SMARCA4 (SWI/SNF Related, Matrix Associated, Actin Dependent Regulator Of Chromatin, Subfamily A, Member 4); SULF2 (Sulfatase 2); VMP1 (Vacuole Membrane Protein 1).

Genes	Chr	Genes	Chr	Expression	Fusion
BCAS4	20	BCAS3	17	Yes	No
ARFGEF2	20	SULF2	20	No	No
RPS6KB1	17	VMP1	17	Yes	Yes
AC099850.1	17	VMP1	17	Yes	Yes
SMARCA4	19	CARM1	19	No	No

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