The Science of Optimism, The Wisdom of Collaboration
By Liz Barrett

This is an amazing moment for oncology. Researchers around the world are working to offer cancer patients longer, healthier lives. Collaboration is a big part of why we’ve arrived at this moment, and I think it’s going to be an even bigger part of how we move forward.

You can think of collaboration as an organizational version of combination therapy. Gone are the days when we treated cancer as a singular disease that demanded a single approach. We now know cancer to be an adaptable, multifaceted condition that warrants a changing combination of therapies.

Gone, too, are the days when we expected a lone company with a singular strategy to achieve major breakthroughs in isolation. We must engage in robust collaboration across the entire cancer care community if we want to keep improving the outlook for our patients.

Take immuno-oncology (I-O), which is currently enjoying a well-deserved moment in the sun, even outside the medical press. We are collaborating with strategic partners in immunotherapy who we believe will help strengthen our portfolio and help speed innovative treatments and combinations to market. Since June 2014, we have established partnerships with several industry partners, including Adaptive Biotechnologies, Syndax, Servier, iTeos, Merck KGaA, Cellectis, Merck and Kyowa Hakko Kirin.

One of the things that makes Pfizer special is our willingness to ask big questions about our most fundamental assumptions. We are truly fearless in uncovering what we don’t yet know. And we bring together an incredible wealth of talent. But we also never assume that we have all of the answers. When we see an opportunity to collaborate with another biopharmaceutical company or institution whose expertise, resources, or strategic insights will help us get a new therapy to patients faster, we’re not afraid to seize it.
In the breast cancer community, we are working in partnership with hundreds of collaborators on innovative clinical trial research that has included more than 2,000 patients with metastatic breast cancer since 2010. We also have invested more than $35 million in unique breast cancer research funding partnerships globally since 2014, providing some of the greatest scientific minds outside our walls with open access to our pipeline to achieve more, faster.

The sheer scale of these collaborations is a great reminder to me that success in oncology, for patients and organizations, is measured not just by the number of drugs that emerge from the pipeline, but also by the meaningful partnerships that you forge in the process.