

**DIVE BRIEF**

# Dana-Farber spinout Precede exits stealth with blood test technology and \$57M

Precede has used the money to develop a platform that reveals the activity of genes and pathways.

Published Oct. 5, 2023

By Nick Paul Taylor  
Contributor

*Rehan Verjee is CEO and co-founder of Precede Biosciences. Permission granted by Precede Biosciences. Photography by Kim Indresano.*

First published on MEDTECH DIVE

**Dive Brief:**

- Precede Biosciences has emerged from stealth with blood test technology designed to improve profiling of cancers and expand the use of liquid biopsies into other indications.
- The Dana-Farber Cancer Institute spinout has raised \$57 million from investors including 5AM Ventures, Binney Street Capital, Lilly Asia Ventures, Illumina Ventures and Bristol Myers Squibb.
- Precede has used the money to develop a research-use-only platform that enables biopharma companies to see the activity of genes and pathways in tissues using 1mL plasma samples.

**Dive Insight:**

The first wave of liquid biopsies assess somatic mutations to show if a tumor is vulnerable to a targeted therapy. However, the tests are unable to inform the treatment of tumors defined by the transcriptional regulation of targets such as HER2. Tissue-based tests, which Precede said “are often poorly performed or not performed at all,” are required to show if a patient is eligible for treatment with many therapies.

The Food and Drug Administration’s list of cleared or approved companion diagnostics includes more than 20 tissue-based tests for the HER2 biomarker alone. Other tissue-based diagnostics test for markers such as BRAF and KRAS. FoundationOne CDx analyzes tissue samples for multiple biomarkers.

Precede sees an opportunity to replace tissue-based tests with a liquid biopsy. The startup is built on technology for profiling circulating chromatin and the DNA methylome in plasma samples.

“Our platform is a true first for the field as it enables comprehensive profiling of dynamic disease-site biology at the gene and pathway level from a simple blood draw,” Precede CEO and co-founder Rehan Verjee said in a statement. “Existing liquid biopsy technologies have impacted millions of patients with cancer over the last decade, and the precision medicine application space for Precede transcends that of even the most successful of these liquid biopsy technologies, creating a significant opportunity for us to impact the practice of medicine.”

Precede has yet to publish papers to support its claims but will share scientific data later this month. The startup is scheduled to discuss its first scientific data in an oral presentation at the European Society for Medical Oncology Congress in October. Precede will simultaneously publish the data in a medical journal.

Academic scientists and biopharma companies can access the platform for research use, enabling them to see if the technology can reveal the vulnerability of tumors to certain mechanisms of action. Precede is also working on blood-based tests that could supplant existing tissue-based tests in clinical practice.