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Andreessen Horowitz Backs Canine Cancer Treatment Startup

One Health hopes to infuse the field of canine oncology with modern practices from human treatment



One Health Co. founder and CEO Christina Lopes. PHOTO: PHOTO: KEVIN KUNZE

By Heather Mack

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Christina Lopes wants personalized medicine to go to the dogs.

The founder and chief executive of One Health Co. has brought together veterinarians and research institutions to develop cancer testing and treatment plans for dogs based on human-grade protocols such as genomic sequencing and targeted therapy.

The San Francisco-based company, which was founded in 2016 and was part of Y Combinator's winter 2018 batch, has raised \$5 million in seed funding to expand access and awareness of the service. Andreessen Horowitz led the round, with participation from Lerer Hippeau and Y Combinator.

One Health works with veterinarians to provide genetic sequencing of tumors, then develop treatment plans that may include medication that is currently used for humans. The company also works with researchers at veterinary schools and pharmaceutical companies to assess which medications might be beneficial.

The goal is to get canine oncology research and treatment to more closely mimic advances in human cancer knowledge and care, said Ms. Lopes, who cited a figure from the Animal Cancer Foundation of some 6 million dogs diagnosed with cancer in the U.S. each year.

“When we looked at the prevalence of dogs with cancer across the country and compared it to how limited diagnostics and treatment options are, we realized there was a lot we could do to spur innovation and collaboration,” Ms. Lopes said.

There is also a growing awareness of the genetic similarity of canine cancer and that of humans. Since research can be conducted faster on animal models, Ms. Lopes said, One Health hopes to help bridge understanding of oncology between species that could lead to better treatments.

Write to Heather Mack at Heather.Mack@wsj.com

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