UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CANCER CENTER AND THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER LAUNCH NATIONAL CLINICAL DRUG TRIAL TO TEST NEW BLADDER CANCER DRUG

New drug could halt recurrence of bladder cancer, one of the most prevalent cancers in the U.S.

HONOLULU – The University of Hawaii Cancer Center, in partnership with The Queen's Medical Center (Queen's) via the Hawaii Cancer Consortium, is launching a new national clinical drug trial looking at the effectiveness of a promising new drug against non-muscle invasive bladder cancer, the most common type of bladder cancer with very high recurrence rates.

Unlike other national drug trials based on the mainland, this clinical trial is based in Hawaii and is among the first to highlight Hawaii as a growing healthcare center and focal point between Asia and the U.S. in the fight against cancer. The project also highlights the specialty inpatient unit at Queen’s where these early clinical trials can be safely performed.

"The medical community does not yet have an effective means of preventing bladder cancer from recurring with currently available treatments," said Dr. Charles Rosser, a UH Cancer Center urologist and principal investigator of the trial. "Finding an effective treatment would go a long way towards preventing more people from
The trial will examine the efficacy of ALT-803, a drug created by Florida-based Altor BioScience Corp., a developer of cancer immunotherapies. In early studies, the drug showed strong potential to stimulate the body's immune system and create a protective and long-lasting effect against tumors. Altor BioScience has received a $1.2 million Small Business Innovation Research grant from the National Cancer Institute to test ALT-803 against non-muscle invasive bladder cancer for this Phase I/II trial.

Patients will be treated at Queen's, in a 6-bed unit located on the Oncology floor. Queen's has the only in-patient Clinical Trials Unit focusing on translational research in Hawaii— in particular, Phase I/II trials. "This is the beginning of many future endeavors partnering with the UH Cancer Center to bring new cancer treatment/trials to Hawaii," said Darlena Chadwick, Vice President of Patient Care at Queen's. "Thanks to the establishment of the Hawaii Cancer Consortium, we are able to attract and recruit innovative researchers like Dr. Rosser, who will engage and work with our local physicians in order to bring their new treatments to the people of Hawaii."

Developing novel effective treatments for bladder cancer is important because bladder cancer has a high rate of recurrence, making it one of the most expensive cancers to treat on a per patient basis. Up to 70 percent of patients with non-muscle invasive bladder cancer may develop cancer recurrence, making it one of the most prevalent cancers in the U.S. The National Cancer Institute estimates nearly 74,700 new cases in the U.S. will be diagnosed in 2014, and nearly 15,600 people will die from it. More than half a million people in the U.S. are bladder cancer survivors.

About The UH Cancer Center

The UH Cancer Center is one of 68 research institutions designated by the National Cancer Institute. Affiliated with the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, the center is dedicated to eliminating cancer through research, education, and improved patient care. Learn more at www.uhcancercenter.org. Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter. Follow us on Twitter @UHCancerCenter.

About The Queen's Medical Center

The Queen's Medical Center, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation established in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, is an acute care medical facility accredited by The Joint Commission. The facility is licensed for 505 acute beds and 28 sub-acute beds and serves as the major tertiary and quaternary referral center for cancer, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, orthopaedics, surgery, emergency medicine and behavioral health medicine. It is the state's designated trauma center verified as Level 2 by the American College of Surgeons. It has the only organ transplantation program in Hawaii. Queen's is a major teaching hospital, serving as a clinical training site for the residency programs sponsored by the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii. Queen's is the only hospital in Hawaii to achieve Magnet® status — the highest institutional honor for hospital excellence — from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The Queen's Medical Center has over 4,500 employees and over 1,200 physicians on its Medical Staff.
About Altor BioScience

Altor is a privately held biotechnology company developing immunotherapies for treating cancer, viral infection, and inflammatory diseases based on its proprietary IL-15, T cell receptor and Tissue Factor antagonist platform technologies. Altor currently has four Phase I and two Phase II trials underway for its product candidates against cancer. For more information, visit www.altorbioscience.com.