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UH CANCER CENTER RESEARCHERS RECEIVE MORE THAN $5.5 MILLION R01 NCI-GRANTS

HONOLULU – University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center researchers received more than $5.5 million R01 NCI-grants spanning several years for research that includes e-cigarettes and bladder cancer. The grants will help reach the goal of reducing the burden of cancer in Hawai‘i and across the nation through research and improved patient care.

"R01 grants are extremely competitive, receiving these grants are great accomplishments. The research will help us continue to generate Hawai‘i specific cancer findings to residents in the state," said Dr. Jerris Hedges, dean of the John A. Burns School of Medicine and interim director of the UH Cancer Center.

The UH Cancer Center along with only 68 other NCI-designated cancer centers compete successfully every year for 75 to 85% of the NCI's $4.8 billion extramural funds. Cancer Center affiliated investigators secure an average of $20 million of national grants annually to support cancer research in Hawai‘i.

Pallav Pokhrel, E-cigarette Marketing Research

Pallav Pokhrel, PhD, MPH, assistant professor in the Cancer Prevention and Control Program received a five-year $2.5 million R01 NCI-grant to study the impact of e-cigarette marketing on the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of young adults (18-29 year olds) in Hawai‘i. The knowledge gained from this study will scientifically inform tobacco control policies and tobacco use prevention and treatment efforts in Hawai‘i and across the U.S.

"This will be the first large research project to study the use of different tobacco products among Hawai‘i young adults. Like the rest of the U.S., young adults in Hawai‘i are at higher risk for tobacco product misuse when compared with other age groups," said Pokhrel.

Young adults appear to be the main targets of e-cigarette marketing campaigns according to Pokhrel. They also show the most widespread use of e-cigarettes in the U.S., as e-cigarettes face limited regulations.
This study will collect surveys and other types of data from more than 2,000 college students in Hawai‘i, including current cigarette smokers, non-smokers, and former smokers every six months over approximately two years.

**Dr. Charles Rosser, Bladder Cancer Research**

Dr. Charles Rosser, professor and director of the Clinical Trials Office and director of the Clinical and Translational Research Program received a five-year more than $3 million R01 NCI-grant to research a urine based bladder cancer detection test that could determine those at risk for the disease. The test could help determine those who may require more invasive evaluation and tests, and reduce the need for other large number of patients who would not have to do uncomfortable and expensive examinations. The test is expected to be more reliable and accurate than other tests in patients who have a history of bladder cancer, who are on lifetime tumor surveillance, as well as in patients with obvious blood in their urine.

The grant for the study, "Multiplexed Protein Biomarker-Based Assay for the Detection of Bladder Cancer," will provide funding to perform a clinical trial to determine the accuracy of the test. Funds will be used to perform the trial in Hawai‘i and UT Southwestern in Dallas. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center will help collect and analyze data.

Bladder cancer is a major problem in Hawai‘i, approximately 200 residents are diagnosed with the disease each year.

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**The University of Hawai‘i Cancer Center** through its various activities, cancer trial patients and their guests, and other visitors adds more than $54 million to the O‘ahu economy. This is equivalent to supporting 776 jobs. It is one of only 69 research institutions designated by the National Cancer Institute. Affiliated with the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, the center is dedicated to eliminating cancer through research, education, and improved patient care. Learn more at [www.uhcancercenter.org](http://www.uhcancercenter.org). Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter](http://www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter). Follow us on [Twitter @UHCancerCenter](http://Twitter @UHCancerCenter).