



CURTANA PHARMACEUTICALS AWARDED NIH SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER GRANT TO ADVANCE GLIOBLASTOMA CANCER THERAPY

SAN DIEGO, CA – October 1, 2014 – Curtana Pharmaceuticals, a privately-held, preclinical stage pharmaceutical company developing the first targeted small molecule therapeutics for glioblastoma (GBM) and other brain cancers, announced today that it has been awarded \$225,000 by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) through the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program. The STTR grant follows closely on the heels of a \$7.6 million product development grant funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT).

Collaborating with Curtana on the STTR grant as Principal Investigator is Professor Santosh Kesari, Director of Neuro-Oncology at Moores Cancer Center, University of California, San Diego and co-founder of Curtana whose research, utilizing a novel combined pharmacophore-based small molecule design methodology, has discovered several candidate compounds.

The joint project will involve important *in vivo* pre-clinical studies designed to validate the efficacy of a small molecule inhibitor of OLIG2 function in GBM. Typically, OLIG2 is not active in normal brain tissue and is not found in normal tissues outside the central nervous system. However, it is highly expressed in all diffuse gliomas and nearly 100% of glioma cancer stem cells (CSCs) that are positive for the CD133 stem cell marker. The relevance for therapy derives from the finding that over-expression of OLIG2 drives tumorigenesis and promotes resistance to chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

“The STTR grant award reinforces the promise of our technology platform and approach to treating glioblastoma,” stated Gregory Stein, M.D., M.B.A., Chief Executive Officer, Curtana Pharmaceuticals. “Both the financial support of the NIH grant and the collaboration with Dr. Kesari and his team, a prominent cancer research group, will accelerate the development of our therapy for brain cancer patients who currently have limited therapeutic options.”

Current treatments have evolved little over the last two decades for GBM, which has a median survival of less than 15-months and a five-year survival rate of less than 10%. GBM is the most common and most aggressive of the malignant primary brain tumors in adults and one of a group of tumors referred to as gliomas. Incidence in the U.S. is approximately 10,000 cases per year. Conventional therapeutic approaches for GBM often include surgery, chemotherapy and



radiation, which target the tumor bulk, but have limited effect on the cancer stem cells (CSCs) that drive tumor growth and recurrence.

About Curtana Pharmaceuticals

Curtana Pharmaceuticals, founded in 2013, is a privately-held, preclinical-stage pharmaceutical company currently headquartered in San Diego, California. The company focuses on the development of novel, first-in-class, small molecule therapeutics targeting cancer stem cells in the central nervous system for the treatment of glioblastoma and other cancers. Curtana's OLIG2 inhibitors will be the only adjuvant treatment for nearly all gliomas, including high-grade glioblastomas, which specifically targets the cancer stem cells and is a potent radiosensitizer. For more information, visit www.curtanapharma.com. The grant reported in this press release was supported by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R1CA186435. The grant will finance 100% of the proposed project.

Disclaimer

The content of this release is solely the representation of Curtana Pharmaceuticals and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

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