

## **CIRM Board Approves Clinical Trials for Blood Cancer and Pediatric Brain Tumors**

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**Oakland, CA** – Today the governing Board of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) awarded \$14.4 million for two new clinical trials for blood cancer and pediatric brain tumors.

These awards bring the total number of CIRM-funded clinical trials to 70.

\$6.0 million was awarded to Immune-Onc Therapeutics to conduct a clinical trial for patients with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and chronic myelomonocytic leukemia (CMML), both of which are types of blood cancer. AML affects approximately 20,000 people in the United States each year and has a 5-year survival rate of about 25 percent. Anywhere from 15-30 percent of CMML cases eventually progress into AML.

Paul Woodard, M.D. and his team will treat AML and CMML patients with an antibody therapy called IO-202 that targets leukemic stem cells. The antibody works by blocking a signal named LILRB4 whose expression is connected with decreased rates of survival in AML patients. The goal is to attain complete cancer remissions and prolonged survival.

\$8.4 million was also awarded to City of Hope to conduct a clinical trial for children with malignant brain tumors. Brain tumors are the most common solid tumor of childhood, with roughly 5,000 new diagnoses per year in the United States.

Leo D. Wang, M.D., Ph.D. and his team will treat pediatric patients with aggressive brain tumors using chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cell therapy. The CAR T therapy involves obtaining a patient's own T cells, which are an immune system cell that can destroy foreign or abnormal cells, and modifying them so that they are able to identify and destroy the brain tumors. The aim of this approach is to improve patient outcome.

"Funding the most promising therapies for aggressive blood cancer and brain tumors has always aligned with CIRM's mission," says Maria T. Millan, M.D., President and CEO of CIRM. "We are excited to fund these trials as the first of many near-term and future stem cell- and regenerative medicine-based approaches that CIRM will be able to support with bond funds under Proposition 14".

### **About CIRM**

At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today's most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$5.5 billion in funding and more than 150 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world's largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.

For more information go to [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov)