The American Brain Tumor Association Awards Clinical Research Grant to Tocagen

Investigation of Tocagen’s treatment in companion dogs with brain cancer holds potential to improve human brain tumor research.

Chicago, IL (PRWEB) May 10, 2011 -- The American Brain Tumor Association (ABTA) today announced that it has awarded funding to San Diego-based Tocagen Inc. for the evaluation of its investigational treatment Toca 511 & Toca FC in companion dogs with brain cancer.

The $200,000 ABTA Clinical Research Grant to Tocagen, a privately held biopharmaceutical company focused on advanced cancer treatments, represents the first time that ABTA has directly funded industry research.

“This research presents a tremendous opportunity to advance treatment for glioblastoma, the most aggressive of brain tumors” said ABTA Executive Director Elizabeth Wilson. “Tocagen’s investigational therapy holds the potential for brain tumor research breakthroughs. We are pleased that our funding will support research towards a new approach for developing human treatments.”

According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), canine cancers share many features with human cancers, including tumor genetics, molecular targets, biological behavior, and response to conventional therapy. Researchers are increasingly recognizing that evaluation of promising new therapies in canine cancer patients can provide valuable data on treatment safety and effectiveness in humans.

“We have designed our product candidate, Toca 511 & Toca FC, to deliver an anti-cancer drug to cancer cells while leaving healthy cells unharmed,” said Harry Gruber, MD, the CEO of Tocagen. “We appreciate the opportunity to work with the ABTA and believe this grant will support important development activities that may take us a step closer towards making a positive difference in the lives of people with brain cancer.”

In 2011, an estimated 64,000 individuals will receive a primary brain tumor diagnosis, and approximately one-quarter of all adult cancer patients will have a cancer that will metastasize to the brain.

The treatment of companion dogs under this grant will be conducted by Dr. Peter Dickinson, a board certified veterinary neurologist at the University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine. For more information about this study, please submit an enquiry form.

About Tocagen
Tocagen is a biopharmaceutical company pursuing the discovery, development and commercialization of products for the treatment of cancer. Tocagen is initially focusing on treatments for patients with advanced cancer for whom it believes no adequate treatment currently exists. Currently, the company is conducting a Phase I/II clinical trial to investigate Toca 511 in combination with Toca FC for the treatment of recurrent high grade glioma (HGG) brain cancer, including glioblastoma multiforme (GBM). Toca 511 is an investigational gene therapy containing a cytosine deaminase gene. Toca FC is an investigational extended-release oral drug containing 5-FC (flucytosine). Please visit www.Tocagen.com for additional information.

About the American Brain Tumor Association (ABTA)
Founded in 1973, the American Brain Tumor Association was the first non-profit organization dedicated to
funding brain tumor research. Today, the ABTA is a catalyst for research-based breakthroughs in the causes, diagnosis and treatment of brain tumors, and recognized as the leading resource in patient-centered brain tumor information, education and support. For more information on the American Brain Tumor Association visit www.abta.org.

###
Contact Information
Sheryl Cash
ABTA
http://www.abta.org
224-220-2786

Carin Canale-Theakston
Tocagen
http://www.tocagen.com
619-849-6001

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.