



## news release

### For immediate release

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### **The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and The University of Kansas Cancer Center Advance Novel Drug to Clinic in 13 Months**

**White Plains, NY And Kansas City, KS** – In only 13 months, a team of researchers and drug developers at The University of Kansas Cancer Center, Ontario Cancer Institute, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), and Beckloff Associates Inc. have advanced a promising new therapy for leukemia into a Phase I clinical trial.

Through their unique partnership in LLS’s Therapy Acceleration Program (TAP), LLS provided \$1.5 million in funding to The University of Kansas Cancer Center to translate a project by Aaron Schimmer, FRCPC, M.D., Ph.D., of the Ontario Cancer Institute, where the trial is currently open. Dr. Schimmer determined that ciclopirox olamine, a currently marketed, topical antifungal agent, was able to disrupt molecules in the body that are important in the growth of leukemia.

“The Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation, has been instrumental in drawing national attention to our extraordinary capabilities in drug discovery, delivery and development,” said Roy Jensen, MD, director of The University of Kansas Cancer Center. “Translating discoveries into tangible outcomes that will save lives, is our goal at The University of Kansas Cancer Center and this project serves as a perfect example of what we are capable of.”

Leveraging the nation’s No. 2 School of Pharmacy (in NIH funding) at the university, the Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation functions as the drug discovery, delivery and development arm of the Cancer Center. The Institute collaborates with industry to form multi-disciplinary, and multi-organizational teams that implement best practices to advance projects efficiently.

“This project represents the power of partnership; collaboration that moves drugs rapidly to patients,” said Scott Weir, PharmD, PhD, director of the Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation. “This model, we believe is the new role of academia in cancer drug discovery. It is central to our strategy in reducing the burden of cancer.”

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“The University of Kansas brings unique capabilities and critical skills necessary to help LLS advance drugs from its research pipeline and get them to blood cancer patients more quickly,” said Louis DeGennaro, Ph.D., LLS’s chief mission officer.

The University of Kansas Cancer Center, and its industry partner Beckloff Associates Inc., have supported various projects by advancing a novel or reformulated drugs toward commercialization.

“The traditional process of discovering and developing a drug from bench to bedside can take 10-15 years and cost over a billion dollars,” said Barbara Atkinson, MD, executive vice chancellor of the University of Kansas Medical Center. “The capabilities our team has in accelerating this process in the budget climate we are in is something we are incredibly proud of and know it will make a real difference in people’s lives.”

The University of Kansas Cancer Center and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society announced a partnership through the Therapy Acceleration Program (TAP) in January 2009. TAP supports private sector and academic-based projects with the goal of moving blood cancer treatments into the development pipeline and closer to commercialization.

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### **About The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® (LLS) is the world’s largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin’s disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world and provides free information and support services.

Founded in 1949 and headquartered in White Plains, NY, LLS has chapters throughout the United States and Canada. To learn more, visit [www.LLS.org](http://www.LLS.org) or contact the Information Resource Center at (800) 955-4572, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET. [www.lls.org](http://www.lls.org).

### **About The University of Kansas Cancer Center**

The University of Kansas Cancer Center is transforming cancer research and clinical care by linking our innovative approach to drug discovery, delivery and development to our nationally-accredited patient care program. Our partnership includes cancer research and healthcare professionals associated with The University of Kansas Medical Center and The University of Kansas Hospital in Kansas City, the University of Kansas in Lawrence, the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Wichita, and the members of the Midwest Cancer Alliance. For more information on The University of Kansas Cancer Center’s research and outreach programs and award-winning patient care offered at the Richard and Annette Bloch Cancer Care Pavilion and The University of Kansas Hospital, please visit [www.kumed.com/cancer](http://www.kumed.com/cancer) or call 1-800-332-6048.