



MD Anderson and Berkeley Lights Launch Optera Therapeutics to Accelerate Development of Cell Therapies for Cancer

Houston, TX and Emeryville, CA – March 7th, 2018 – [The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center](#) and [Berkeley Lights, Inc.](#) today announced the launch of Optera Therapeutics Corp, a biopharmaceutical company developing cell therapies with scalable manufacturing solutions for cancer.

Cell-based immunotherapies where patients are treated with their own immune cells, such as chimeric antigen receptor (CAR-T) and T cell receptor (TCR) engineered T cells, tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL) and endogenous T cells (ETC), have demonstrated promise for treating cancer. Optera Therapeutics will develop cancer cell therapies discovered at MD Anderson and apply Berkeley Lights' advanced cell therapy manufacturing systems with the goal of making these novel therapies accessible to all.

“MD Anderson is dedicated to improving the standard of care for our patients as we strive to realize our mission to end cancer,” said Patrick Hwu, M.D., division head of Cancer Medicine. “Our hope is that – by combining our cell therapy research expertise with advanced automation capabilities – we will enhance our ability to deliver these treatments to every patient who needs them.”

Optera Therapeutics is developing cell therapies under investigation at MD Anderson by leaders in the field of cellular immunology including Cassian Yee, M.D., professor of Melanoma Medical Oncology; Katy Rezvani, M.D., Ph.D., Chief, Section of Cellular Therapy at Department of Stem Cell Transplantation and Cellular Therapy, Elizabeth Shpall, M.D., professor of Stem Cell Transplantation and Cellular Therapy; Chantale Bernatchez, Ph.D., assistant professor of Melanoma Medical Oncology; Sattva Neelapu, M.D., professor of Lymphoma and Myeloma, and Greg Lizee, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Melanoma Medical Oncology.

“Cell therapy is transforming the standard of care for cancer patients” said Yee. “Optera will capitalize on truly disruptive technology and allow us to extend our ability to treat more patients, for more cancers, in a shorter period of time.”

Eric Hobbs, chief executive officer of Berkeley Lights, Inc., added, “the Berkeley Lights team is privileged and excited to join forces with our colleagues at MD Anderson who have devoted their lives to defeating cancer. We are absolutely driven to make their life-saving cell therapies accessible to all.”

About MD Anderson:

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston ranks as one of the world's most respected centers focused on cancer patient care, research, education and prevention. The institution's sole mission is to end cancer for patients and their families



around the world. MD Anderson is one of only 47 comprehensive cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Institute (NCI). MD Anderson is ranked No.1 for cancer care in U.S. News & World Report's "Best Hospitals" survey. It has ranked as one of the nation's top two hospitals for cancer care since the survey began in 1990, and has ranked first 13 times in the last 16 years. MD Anderson receives a cancer center support grant from the NCI of the National Institutes of Health (P30 CA016672).

About Berkeley Lights:

Berkeley Lights is a digital cell biology company that develops and commercializes platforms for the acceleration of discovery, development, and delivery of cell based products and therapies. At the intersection of biology, technology and information, our platforms automate the manipulation, analysis and selection of individual cells, creating ultimate scalability and deep cell insights. The Beacon platform* is ideally suited for cell line development, antibody discovery (including direct B-cell workflows), gene editing, and antibody engineering workflows. Each workflow provides a 100 fold increase in insights, 10 times faster, at a fraction of the cost.

* For Research Use Only. Not for use in diagnostic procedures.

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