

For Immediate Release
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BC-developed prostate cancer drug holds out hope for clinical trials

Vancouver, B.C. – A new potential prostate cancer drug developed by the BC Cancer Agency offers hope where other drugs have failed.

EPI-001 was developed by Dr. Marianne Sadar, distinguished scientist, BC Cancer Agency, and Dr. Raymond Andersen, distinguished professor, University of British Columbia. Research published today in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation* confirms that Dr. Sadar's team has provided proof-of-principle that EPI-001 works on prostate cancer cells currently resistant to drug therapy.

To develop EPI-001, Dr. Sadar's team took a new approach. Instead of focusing on the androgen receptor protein, as other scientists in the field have done, Dr. Sadar believed that the N-terminal, an area at the opposite end of the protein structure, was the true "engine" that should be targeted.

EPI-001 could be a very significant drug discovery. Current drug therapies for advanced prostate cancer aim at the opposite end of the hormone receptor, away from the "engine." While initially effective in slowing tumour growth, these therapies are not curative. On average, 20 per cent of patients with prostate cancer have recurrence, and to date patients have had no other successful treatment options.

Globally, in 2007, it was estimated that more than a quarter of a million men died from prostate cancer.

"The approach that Dr. Sadar has taken is novel, and has the potential to overcome treatment-resistant prostate cancer," said Dr. Kim Chi, medical director, clinical trials unit at the BC Cancer Agency. "I'm really excited about the potential of this drug and look forward to getting it into clinical trials here at the BC Cancer Agency, so that it can benefit patients."

EPI-001 is also drawing international attention from the medical community. "Dr. Sadar's fresh approach has interesting pre-clinical activity," said Dr. Oliver Sartor, medical director, at the Tulane Cancer Center in New Orleans. "These compounds

need to enter clinical trials to determine whether the promising activity in model systems can be replicated in the human setting.”

Clinical trials require money to move forward, and Dr. Sadar and her team need continued support from donors, which enabled the research to come this far in drug development and pre-clinical success.

“The importance of donor dollars invested in this groundbreaking research at the BC Cancer Agency cannot be overstated,” says Douglas Nelson, president and CEO, BC Cancer Foundation. “We are extremely grateful to our donors and community partners, including the Country Meadows Senior Men’s Charity Golf Classic, who have supported Dr. Sadar’s research through the BC Cancer Foundation for many years.”

Dr. Sadar’s research was also supported by Canada Safeway Foundation and peer-reviewed grant funds from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the U.S.A. National Cancer Institute, and the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Prostate Cancer Research Program.

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The BC Cancer Agency is part of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), providing province-wide specialty healthcare. Together, we are transforming healthcare through innovation. The BC Cancer Agency provides a comprehensive cancer control program for the people of British Columbia by working with community partners to deliver a range of oncology services, including prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, research, education, supportive care, rehabilitation and palliative care. For more information, visit www.bccancer.ca.

The BC Cancer Foundation is the bridge that connects philanthropic support and research breakthroughs in cancer knowledge. As the fundraising partner of the BC Cancer Agency and the largest charitable funder of cancer research in this province, we enable donors to make contributions to leading-edge research that has a direct impact on improvements to cancer care for patients in British Columbia. We fund with the goal of finding solutions. Visit www.bccancerfoundation.com to make a donation or to learn how you can make a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.

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