CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:
DP150031

Project Title:
A Multi-Targeted Approach for Recurrent Glioblastoma and Other Aggressive Cancers: Exploiting the Potential of IL-4 Fusion Proteins Treatment of Cancer

Award Mechanism:
New Company Product Development Award

Principal Investigator:
Merchant, Fahar

Entity:
Medicenna Therapeutics, Inc.

Lay Summary:

Medicenna Therapeutics Inc. is an immuno-oncology company led by experienced entrepreneurs with proven track records win cancer drug development. Medicenna is developing treatments for brain cancers that affect both adults and children, including glioblastoma multiforme (GBM). GBM tumors are the most common form of adult brain cancer, with 11,000 new cases annually in US. They are the second most common cause of brain cancer deaths. These cancers make a protein on the cancer cells' surface called the IL-4 receptor (IL-4R). Most normal cells have no IL-4R. Medicenna has developed an anti-cancer agent, MDNA55, which is administered directly into tumors. MDNA55 targets and kills brain cancer cells, while not harming healthy cells. MDNA55 has the potential to save lives and extend survival for brain cancer patients, especially among the 60% of patients whose tumors recur. MDNA55 has shown promising clinical results among 72 adult GBM patients. The FDA has already granted MDNA55 Orphan Drug and Fast Track Designations. Medicenna's goal is to conduct two clinical trials for GBM patients to test MNDA55's safety, effectiveness and dosage. Texas-based drug manufacturing, clinical research organizations and clinics will support the trials, in Texas and across the U.S. Medicenna' drug development platform will expand Texas' cancer research capacity benefitting patients and their families, while expanding Texas' research infrastructure and creating new high-quality jobs.