

Austrianova starts cell bank for cancer therapy

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Singapore: Austrianova Singapore has established a research cell bank, the first step towards late-phase clinical trials in patients with advanced inoperable pancreatic cancer, as well as additional positive clinical data.

The research cell bank was established in partnership with ViruSure, a leading contract research organization based in Vienna, Austria. The cells, which have an augmented capacity to activate chemotherapeutic agents, are derived from the same cells as those that were encapsulated and used in two previous promising mid-phase clinical trials for the treatment of advanced pancreatic cancer. The data from these previous studies have been recently highlighted in a review of promising cancer therapies by leading international scientists from the International Society for Cell and Gene that has just been published in *Cancer Gene Therapy*. The research cell bank will now be used to set up production of encapsulated cells for additional clinical trials.

"The generation of this research cell bank is the initial step required for the commencement of later stage clinical trials of our encapsulated cell therapy in advanced pancreatic cancer and represents a milestone along the way to getting this treatment to the market," said Dr Brian Salmons, CEO of Austrianova Singapore.

ViruSure stated, "We are pleased to be involved in achieving this important milestone for Austrianova Singapore that will enable the future development and evaluation of their treatment for pancreatic cancer."

Prof Walter H Gunzburg, chairman of Austrianova Singapore, said, "The endorsement of our technology and treatment approach for cancers such as pancreatic cancer by our peers and the production of a research cell bank represent two key events for the Company. We look forward to advancing our oncology product as well as applying our cell encapsulation technology to other advanced medicinal products."