

IEDC News

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Indianapolis Firm Developing Technology to Ease Cancer Treatments

INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 27, 2009) - Indianapolis researchers are using a Small Business Innovation Research grant to develop technology which could alleviate negative side effects during stem cell transplants for cancer patients.

General BioTechnology will use a \$350,000 grant from the state to further develop and test its Advanced CryoTechnology Cell Washing Device. The Indiana grant accompanies federal funding of more than \$1 million to develop the device for clinical use. The company plans to begin a pilot safety study of the technology in the first quarter of 2010 with Indiana University before a larger clinical trial later in the year continuing with the Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Wash., and Indiana University.

"We must continue to support companies like General BioTechnology that are leading the charge to increase the safety and comfort of medical procedures," said Mitch Roob, Secretary of Commerce and chief executive officer of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. "We know that high-technology companies like this will create the jobs of tomorrow, but more importantly, they have the potential to improve the quality of life for people across the world."

General BioTechnology's device, which is similar in size to a microwave oven, pumps bone marrow stem cells through a specially designed tube. The fiber filled tube gradually filters the Dimethyl Sulfoxide preservative from the bone marrow transplant while still maintaining the cell's efficacy. DMSO is a commonly used preservative which increases the shelf life of cells, but can cause complications with patients when it is injected into their system.

"There has been a demand for this technology as long as frozen bone marrow transplants have been used to treat patients. This project originated through our company's mission of listening to physicians and specifically developing technologies to meet critical needs," said Erik J. Woods, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of General BioTechnology. "Over 30,000 people a year in this country receive this type of procedure, our hope is that our system will help yield better outcomes with fewer complications."

Beyond this initial trial for bone marrow, ongoing research involves using the cell washing

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