Baylor/UT Health Center for AIDS Research receives five year renewal

Baylor College of Medicine
HOUSTON -- (August 27, 2010) -- The Baylor College of Medicine and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston's Center for AIDS Research [1] has received a five-year renewal from the National Institutes of Health [2]. The center was established at BCM [3] in 1994 and partnered with UTHealth [4] in 2004. It is designed to support an environment that facilitates and promotes HIV and AIDS research.

Important center

"Having this type of center in Houston is very beneficial because HIV/AIDS research crosses multiple disciplines and institutions," said Dr. Janet Butel [5], director of the center and distinguished service professor and chair of the department of molecular virology and microbiology [6] at BCM.

It's also important because Houston has a significant number of persons diagnosed with HIV infections. In 2007, the Houston community was ranked 7th in the nation for cumulative number of AIDS cases, Butel said.

Productive collaboration

Dr. Michael Ross, professor of public health at UTHealth and a member of the Baylor/UTHealth Center for AIDS Research, said, "This has been a very productive collaboration between Baylor and UTHealth. Between the two institutions, we have a huge amount of complementary expertise that has made this a center of cutting-edge HIV research nationally and internationally."

The goal of the center is to promote research, including basic, clinical, behavioral, epidemiological and translational research, for the prevention, detection or treatment of HIV and AIDS. It supports activities and services that stimulate communication and build collaborations. The center also supports pilot grants in HIV and AIDS research, enabling scientists to establish new research projects and then receive external funding for their work.

Six core facilities enable investigators to access specialized resources for their research. These facilities provide expertise in immunology, virology, clinical research, design and analysis, behavioral sciences, and international research.

New goal

One new goal of the center is to expand research on HIV-associated malignancies.

"As HIV-infected patients are living longer due to effective antiviral therapies, they are developing various types of cancer," said Butel.

Researchers at the center will work with colleagues at the Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center [7] at BCM to focus on this area of research.

The Baylor/UTHealth Center for AIDS Research is one of 20 NIH-funded centers in the nation.

SOURCE [8]

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