New Institute Paves Way for Rapid Cancer Drug Development

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GREENVILLE, S.C., Oct. 12 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center (GHS) unveiled details of its new Institute for Translational Oncology Research, a visionary cancer initiative that will help pave the way for new breakthroughs in rapid drug development, diagnostic discovery and advanced cancer care. ITOR is part of the GHS Cancer Center, a recognized regional multi-disciplinary center.

ITOR partners will include leading pharmaceutical companies, research universities, private industry and the government. GHS made the announcement today (Oct. 12).

The new institute, known as ITOR, builds on the success of GHS' Clinical Research Unit and its rapidly-developing biorepository tissue-banking service, which helped make GHS one of the country's prominent players in the development of promising new oncology drugs. Numerous first-in-human studies have been conducted through the CRU, which began in 2004 as part of GHS' long-standing relationship with Cancer Centers of the Carolinas.

The evolving institute is steadily moving into the arena of personalized gene-based cancer therapies, which match the treatment to tumor-specific genetic abnormalities and patient-specific predictors of toxicity. Such translational research helps bring discovery directly from the lab to practical applications in patients. Part of ITOR's strength is its focus on using innovative public and private sector partnerships and initiatives to advance leading-edge cancer care.

"Through ITOR, we will be able to make new therapies accessible to patients far more quickly than traditional models have allowed," said Joe Stephenson, M.D., who serves as the institute's medical director.

To accomplish the goal of speeding-up the delivery of patient-specific therapies, ITOR strives to *identify* new ways to achieve earlier prediction of drug success, *find* new applications and patients for existing drugs and *integr*
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