



News for Immediate Release

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Department of Health Presents Health Research Grant to the Geisinger Clinic

Harrisburg – Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Michael Wolf today presented a grant to the Geisinger Clinic that will help fund a research project furthering advancements in the treatment of brain cancer.

The Commonwealth Universal Research Enhancement (CURE) Program funds grants for health research with the purpose of discovering new scientific knowledge to help improve the health of all Pennsylvanians.

These grants, allocated in the 2012-13 fiscal year, focus on specific research priorities established and reviewed by the Department of Health in conjunction with the Health Research Advisory Committee, a panel made up of universities and research institutes.

"The research funded through this grant will help to not only make great strides toward improving quality of care for patients, but to impact the lives of Pennsylvanians through groundbreaking new discoveries in the treatment of brain cancer," Wolf said. "CURE grants over the past 11 years have led to incredible innovations in treating diseases and health conditions."

Wolf presented the \$110,249 award to Geisinger Health System's Chief Scientific Officer Dr. David H. Ledbetter, the Weis Center for Research's Director of Neurological Research Dr. Nikolaos Tapinos, and The Weis Center for Research's Director Dr. David Carey.

"We're embarking on some exciting new territory in the treatment of brain cancer," Carey said. "This is an outstanding opportunity to move research from the laboratory into the clinic. While difficult, this type of translational research is needed to drive continuous improvement in individual health."

By law, the grants must focus on clinical, health services, and/or biomedical research, with a goal of improving health status and access.

"Behind these promising developments is an increasing awareness that brain cancer isn't one disease," Tapinos explained. "Each tumor has its own characteristics and our research is decoding the factor that allows some tumors to survive and grow, which will help develop treatments to work against that growth."

This year, there are 28 CURE grant recipients receiving awards totaling \$41.9 million.

Since the grant program's inception, Geisinger Clinic has received more than \$5.3 million in CURE funding, part of the nearly \$800 million in total CURE awards.

Find more information about the CURE program on the Department of Health's website at www.health.state.pa.us/cure.

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Below is a brief description of the project that will be supported through the grant to the Geisinger Clinic:

The project will use knowledge from basic research to provide more targeted treatment for patients with brain cancer. Brain tumors originate from stem cells in the brains of patients. These stem cells have various gene mutations and deregulated gene expression mechanisms. The project has identified a novel component of the Protein Phosphatase 2 (PP2A) gene that inhibits the function of PP2A in these stem cells.