

## NEWS RELEASE

Calgary, Alberta

---

### Groundbreaking cancer immunotherapy research and care advances with \$25 million donation from Riddell family

The University of Calgary (UCalgary), the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation and the Alberta Cancer Foundation are pleased to announce a \$25 million donation from the Riddell family in support of cancer immunotherapy research and care – and advancing the goal of making Calgary home to one of the best cancer centres in the world.

This transformative gift will establish the Riddell Centre for Cancer Immunotherapy, helping to reduce the burden of cancer in children, adolescents, and adults and improve survival through the rapid development and implementation of safe and effective precision cell and immune therapies for cancer.

More importantly, it will bring hope and healing to those who have no other treatment options.

"Immunotherapy enables us to boost a patient's own immune system to recognize and attack their cancer cells," said Dr. Douglas Mahoney, PhD, associate professor at the Cumming School of Medicine and director of the Riddell Centre. "Right now, it is used to help children and adults with certain forms of cancer who don't respond to conventional therapies, including rare and hard-to-treat cancers. With more research, I am confident that it will become a mainstay of cancer treatment for patients with many different forms of cancer."

These precision cellular therapies will be tested and used on treatment-resistant solid tumours – making the Riddell Centre one of the first centres in Canada to trial this approach. The Riddell Centre will also have a particular focus on difficult pediatric cancers, a population that is often overlooked by traditional clinical trials.

"Our family is so pleased to be able to support this groundbreaking work happening in our own backyard," says Sue Riddell Rose. "Alberta has become a world-recognized hub for research in immunotherapy cancer treatment and it is now time to take this research and its clinical application to a whole new level. Our hope is that the discoveries that come from the Riddell Centre for Cancer Immunotherapy will quickly take immunotherapy to a mainstream treatment protocol and very directly improve care and outcomes for cancer patients in Alberta and beyond."

"We are grateful to the Riddell family for their history of generous support for world-leading care and research to improve health outcomes for children and youth in our community and around the world," says Saifa Koonar, President and CEO of the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation. "This remarkable investment is a gift of hope to families walking unthinkable cancer journeys with their children."

Alberta is well positioned within a growing immunotherapy and cellular therapy landscape in Canada, thanks to an interdisciplinary network of specialized researchers and clinicians and early provincial investments in clinical trials and clinical data infrastructure that make these advancements possible. The generosity of donors like the Riddell family help accelerate the impact that cellular therapy can have on Albertans and Canadians facing cancer.

“For patients who are eligible, immunotherapy may represent the most significant progress in reversing treatment-resistant cancers in decades. And it’s happening right here, in Alberta,” says Wendy Beauchesne, CEO of the Alberta Cancer Foundation. “This means we can provide early access to the most advanced experimental cancer treatments for Alberta patients – which is an incredible gift indeed.”

The Riddell Centre will build a Calgary-based biomanufacturing program to enable rapid, high-quality and cost-effective manufacturing of cell therapies that meet Health Canada and international regulatory standards. Once fully operational, this local expansion of biomanufacturing capacity will create employment and efficiencies that will both speed up access for patients to new immunotherapies and create cost savings for the Alberta health-care system.

“As we work to solve the cancer challenge and improve the lives of patients in Canada and around the world, UCalgary is also helping local industries to grow — including biotechnology — and building entirely new ones,” says Dr. Ed McCauley, UCalgary president and vice-chancellor. “The Riddell Centre for Cancer Immunotherapy will be a big part of Calgary’s economic story through its made-in-Alberta approach to biomanufacturing new cellular and immunotherapies.”

This gift also puts the OWN.CANCER campaign even closer to its goal of raising \$250 million to help advance care and research at Calgary’s new Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre – the largest centre of its kind in Canada. When it opens in 2024, the 1.3 million square foot building will offer world-leading cancer care, research and education, together under one roof.

-30-

**Media contacts:**

**Inquiries related to UCalgary and Dr. Mahoney:**

Kelly Johnston, Senior Communications Specialist

[kelly.johnston2@ucalgary.ca](mailto:kelly.johnston2@ucalgary.ca)

403-220-5012

**Inquiries related to OWN.Cancer campaign and Alberta Cancer Foundation:**

Ryan Kelly, VP, Communications and Community Partnerships

[ryan.kelly@albertacancer.ca](mailto:ryan.kelly@albertacancer.ca)

780-220-8791

**Inquiries related to Alberta Children’s Hospital Foundation:**

Jody Schwartz, VP, Communications + Donor Relations

[jschwartz@achf.com](mailto:jschwartz@achf.com)