



## Major Breakthrough in Pediatric Brain Cancer- First in 30 Years

### One Mom's Determination Pushes Through Chemo-Free Clinical Trial

**Orlando, Fla.** (October 23, 2014) – Amber Larkin, Founder of Noah's Light Foundation, received notification that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center approval to proceed with a new pediatric cancer treatment, called the NOAH Protocol. This investigative treatment aims at reducing and eliminating several types of pediatric brain cancer. The implications for groundbreaking results have not been achieved in over 30 years of research and development.

"Noah was diagnosed just before Halloween trick-or-treating, and it's only fitting that we've received FDA approval to begin testing this month," says Larkin. "Long before I lost my son to cancer, I knew that there had to be better treatments through personalized cell therapy - using your own immune system to help fight the cancer. His illness has defined the rest of my life. There are so many more 'Noahs' out there, and I now do this for each and every one. My wish is that the NOAH Protocol becomes a catalyst for the cure for all cancers."

In 2011, Larkin met Laurence Cooper, M.D., Ph.D., professor of Pediatrics with The University of Texas MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital. "Our team of diverse professionals has worked side-by-side with Amber for three years to enable this new treatment," said Cooper. "The ability to test the NOAH Protocol in patients is due to the sheer will of one mom, one little boy, and an incredible determination by the team at MD Anderson to prevent other children from suffering from brain cancer. This is the first big step."

The NOAH Protocol was named after Noah Larkin who died at age eight in 2012 from medulloblastoma, and stands for "**New Opportunity Advancing Hope.**" "Hope for families is what pushes our devoted team forward every day," said Cooper. "Amber's passion has ignited our team and we are propelled by Noah's memory through the ups and downs of bringing a new idea from the laboratory bench to the child's bedside."

### **The NOAH Protocol**

MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital will enroll eligible patients in the NOAH Protocol by the end of the calendar year. The treatment consists of a simple blood draw to obtain NK cells, which are "natural killers" found within a person's circulating white blood cells. These cells which will be activated and educated in the laboratory to hunt for the brain tumors and then will be directly inserted into the diseased area of the brain through a new surgical procedure developed by David Sandberg, M.D., director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital.

"Success is a journey, and we are taking the first steps toward treating children who have been given no other options for treatment," says Cooper. "We hope this will prove to be the answer."

The types of cancers eligible for treatment are highly malignant tumors of the 4<sup>th</sup> ventricle (posterior fossa) and include medulloblastoma (MB), atypical teratoid/rhabdoid tumors (AT/RT) and ependymoma. Study information for NOAH Protocol is available at [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov).

For more information about The NOAH Protocol, visit The University of Texas MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital website at <http://www.mdanderson.org/patient-and-cancer-information/care-centers-and-clinics/childrens-cancer-hospital/index.html>.

### **About Noah's Light Foundation**

Noah's Light Foundation (NLF) was founded by Amber Larkin in 2010 as she and her son battled his medulloblastoma, a highly malignant primary brain tumor. After numerous months of researching, meetings and observations, she discovered the lack of awareness and funding to find a cure for these children. NLF is determined to find a cure for pediatric brain cancer by supporting visionary doctors in pediatric oncology, funding new research in the field, raising awareness, and enriching the lives of the brave children struggling with this disease. For more information, visit [www.noahslightfoundation.org](http://www.noahslightfoundation.org).

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