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Announcement of iPSC derived gene-modified NK cell development targeting solid tumors

HEALIOS K.K. ("Healios") has been moving forward with efforts to create next generation immunotherapies for solid tumors by combining its iPS cell and gene editing technology expertise. In this notice we are disclosing that we have decided to add the development of allogeneic, iPS cell derived gene-modified natural killer (NK) cells to our pipeline (development code: HLCN061).

1. Details of the decision

We are moving forward with development of iPSC derived cells to provide new treatments for patients suffering from refractory cancers. Under this policy, we have decided to begin promoting research and development for a next generation cancer immunotherapy using allogeneic, iPSC derived NK cells that have had specific functions reinforced using gene editing technology in order to target solid tumors. We expect to enter the Japan and United States markets.

The advent of molecular targeted agents and immunotherapy has led to improved results of cancer treatment; however, the field is still in need of further treatment methods. This is especially true of solid tumors, which is a current area of tremendous unmet medical need. Solid tumors refer generally to cancers that appear in organs and systems other than the blood.

2. Future outlook

There is no special expense to start this development and research. We expect that steady promotion of this development and research will lead to future sales revenue and corporate value. Healios will promptly announce if any matter occurs that must be disclosed.

*Natural killer (NK) cells

Natural killer (NK) cells are a subset of lymphocytes, a type of white blood cell. NK cells play a central role in a cell mediated defense system that human bodies naturally have, and attack cancer cells and virus-infected cells. The expected efficacy of treatments using NK cells includes life-extension, promotion of healing, relief of symptoms, and improvement of quality of life.