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*Boston University*



## Boston University Medical Center

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# NEWS

For Immediate Release  
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### FALLER APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE HUBERT HUMPHREY CANCER CENTER

Boston, Mass.--Creating an innovative cancer outreach program with community hospitals and neighborhood health centers is one of the major goals of Braintree resident Douglas V. Faller, M.D., Ph.D., the new director of the Hubert H. Humphrey Cancer Center at Boston University Medical Center. Faller also has been named professor of medicine and vice-chairman of the Division of Medicine for hematology/oncology at Boston University School of Medicine, and will head hematology/oncology activities at The University Hospital (UH), Boston City Hospital (BCH) and the Boston Veteran's Hospital.

According to Faller, this outreach program will be unique in the city of Boston and surrounding communities, because most outreach at Boston teaching hospitals has centered on internal medicine and family practice and not specifically on cancer prevention and detection. Faller says that the Cancer Center will work with UH and its affiliated community hospitals throughout the state to expand cancer screenings and enhance education programs. It will also intensify BCH's cancer prevention and sickle cell anemia programs in neighborhood health centers in Boston, particularly in the South End.

"It is easier to prevent most adult cancers than it is to cure them," says Faller. "Many adult cancers, such as lung, bowel, breast, and head and neck cancers are curable if detected early. We believe that one of the most important things we can do for the community is to promote the prevention and the early detection of cancers. We hope to provide expertise, consultation, on-site staff when possible and teaching faculty to sensitize the community to the importance of the prevention and early detection of cancer."

Faller, who was most recently an associate professor of pediatrics at Children's Hospital Medical Center and the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, brings to his new position a unique blend of basic science and clinical practice experience.

Clinically, Faller will emphasize a high level of patient-oriented care. "I want to streamline and simplify the continuity of patient care as much as possible, so that it is perceived by the patient as loving and considerate. In many hospitals, care for the cancer patient has become less personal as therapies and treatments grow more complex and technical," he says.

As head of the Cancer Center, Faller also will direct and develop cancer research at the basic laboratory level, working with the many scientists who are already investigators in the Cancer Center. Faller will also continue his research in the two areas in which he has already made significant contributions. For example, he is investigating how the mechanisms that control and restrict normal cell growth are bypassed or suppressed in tumor cells, resulting in abnormal proliferation of malignant cells.

He is also studying the mechanisms by which cancer cells escape detection and destruction by the body's immune system. He has already discovered that some tumor viruses have evolved ways of making the cells they infect invisible to the immune system. "They turn off the cell's own tissue-type antigens, which prevents the immune system from recognizing or interacting with these cells," he says. Faller also has developed ways to reactivate the tissue-type antigens in infected cells to make them recognizable and, therefore, vulnerable to the immune system.

Faller earned his undergraduate degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and his medical degree at Harvard Medical School. He also earned a doctorate in the areas of cancer viruses and cell biology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, working in the laboratory of Nobel laureate David Baltimore. He served a residency in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and a fellowship in adult and pediatric hematology and oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Children's Hospital and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Faller is the recipient of numerous honors, among them a Hartford Foundation Fellowship, the Anna Fuller Award, the American Cancer Society

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Senior Faculty Award, and election to the American Society for Clinical Investigation. He has received grant support from the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the National Institutes of Health, the American Heart Association and the Hood Foundation.

The Cancer Center at Boston University Medical Center was founded in 1974 and named four years later for Hubert H. Humphrey, former Vice President of the United States who died of cancer in 1978.