Charleston researcher gets grant for pulmonary fibrosis therapy
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A top Medical University of South Carolina researcher and two biotechnology firms have been awarded $200,000 to advance the development of a treatment for pulmonary disease. The grant money is from National Institutes of Health and its National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. It’s part of an NIH program that seeks to transfer research from the lab to the marketplace.

One of the lead investigators is Dr. Carol Feghali-Bostwick, MUSC’s Kitty Trask Holt endowed chair since 2013. Her private-sector collaborators are Novici Biotech LLC of Vacaville, Calif., and iBio Inc., which is the private-sector sponsor.

The project is focused on pulmonary fibrosis. The disease occurs when lung tissue becomes damaged and scarred, which, in turn, causes breathing problems.

“Our collaboration with iBio and Novici is yielding exciting progress,” Feghali-Bostwick said in a written statement Wednesday. “I look forward to working with this team to translate laboratory bench discoveries into effective therapies.”

The $200,000 grant took effect Sept. 1, Newark, Del.-based iBio said. A $1.5 million additional round of funding could kick in after certain milestones from the first phase are reached and a progress report is approved.

“We are encouraged by the positive reviews that led to approval of this grant application,” said Terence Ryan, chief scientific officer for iBio.

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