HCW Biologics Presents Newly Identified Distinctive Features of Its Lead T Cell Engager Candidate Built with Company's Proprietary T-Cell Engager Platform, Further Supporting Its Use in Treating Solid Tumors at the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer's 41st Annual Meeting

November 6, 2026

HCW11-018b induces/promotes tertiary lymphoid structure formation inside tumors

HCW11-018b converts immunological "cold" tumors into "hot" tumors

HCW11-018b was generated using the Company's non-Fc TRBC platform, combining elements that enhance T-cell activation and tumor infiltration while mitigating immunosuppression

MIRAMAR, Fla., Nov. 06, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- -- HCW Biologics Inc. (the "Company" or "HCW Biologics") (NASDAQ: HCWB), a U.S.-based clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company and leading developer in novel multi-functional fusion immunotherapeutics, for the treatment of autoimmune diseases, cancer, and senescence-associated dysplasia, announced a major update for its multivalent, second-generation T-Cell Engager ("TCE") Program, presented at the 41st Annual Meeting of the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer ("SITC"), taking place from November 4 – 8, 2026, in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Poster (Abstract #627), entitled, "*An innovative approach to improve Bispecific T-cell engagers for solid tumor therapy*," will be presented during the Poster Session at Poster Hall from 10 a.m.– 2 p.m. MT and 5 – 7 p.m. MT, on Friday, November 6.

Using a novel, Fc-free platform for integrating IL-15 signaling and TGF-β neutralization, the Company has developed a T-Cell Engager Program focused on the treatment of solid tumors. HCW11-018b, the lead candidate of the "Big BiTE" program, is a multivalent T-cell engager designed to enhance anti-tumor activities and tolerability to treat a wide spectrum of solid tumors.

HCW11-018b has a unique feature that has not been reported for any other T-Cell Engagers. In preclinical studies, HCW11-108b was shown to induce/promote tertiary lymphoid structures ("TLS") formation inside tumors. TLS are organized ectopic immune cell aggregates that form within non-lymphoid tissues — including solid tumors and the tumor microenvironment — in response to chronic inflammation. TLS are immune hubs in solic tumors that are clinically associated with more favorable outcomes following immunotherapy. Developing inside the tumor microenvironment, TLS locally train and expand killer T-cells ($CD8^+$) and B-cells right where the threat exists, preventing immune exhaustion that can happen during immune cell transit from distant nodes.

HCW11-018b incorporates the core features of a BiTE while adding components that alleviate immunosuppression and promote activation and tumor infiltration of cancer-fighting cells. The BiTE component of HCW11-018b contains an anti-CD3 single-chain antibody and an antibody domain that targets human Tissue Factor ("TF"), which is overexpressed in a wide spectrum of solid tumors. In addition, the molecule includes soluble IL-15, an IL-15 receptor α ("IL-15Rα") domain, and a TGF-β receptor II ("TGFβRII") domain trap. The result is a compound that targets TF-positive tumor cells, engages CD3 on T cells, incorporates IL-15/IL-15Rα activity, and uses a soluble TGFβRII domain as a TGF-β trap to reduce immunosuppression. In preclinical studies, this structure has allowed HCW11-018b to turn "cold" tumors into "hot" tumors by promoting infiltration of immune cells, in part by utilizing Cis-binding (or cis-interaction) to enhance immune cell reactivity. In tumor efficacy models, HCW11-018b promotes targeted $CD8^+$ T cell killing of TF-positive tumor cells, inhibits growth of solid tumors, in some models leading to complete shrinkage of patient-derived pancreatic tumor implants, and reduces spread of tumor metastases.

Communication with FDA at a recent Type B meeting provided the Company with clear guidance for the next steps to prepare its IND application to support a first-in-human clinical study to evaluate HCW11-018b in cancer, which the Company intends to do in the first half of 2027. In support of potential upcoming clinical trials, the Company has initiated cGMP manufacturing. HCW Biologics has created a high-expression production cell line and a streamlined GMP manufacturing process, utilizing a relatively simple manufacturing process similar to that used to make therapeutic monoclonal antibodies.

Dr. Hing C. Wong, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "The SITC annual meeting provides us with the right venue to make this major update on our T-Cell Engager as a second-generation immunotherapy for cancer, giving us an opportunity to highlight the uniqueness and advantages of HCW11-018b. With our non-Fc based T-Cell Engager program derived from the TRBC platform, we have created a second-generation T-Cell Engager, HCW11-018b. HCW11-018b has demonstrated that the addition of TGFβ-trap and IL-15 components onto a BiTE domain can overcome the deficiencies of BiTE alone for solid tumor therapy."

Dr. Wong continued, "The feature of our lead T-Cell Engager candidate we recently discovered that it can promote tertiary lymphoid structure formation is unique and exciting. This distinctive feature of HCW11-018b and other TCEs that we built with our TRBC platform is highly differentiated from other BiTEs for solid tumor therapy."

About HCW Biologics:

HCW Biologics Inc. (the "Company") (NASDAQ: HCWB) is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing transformative fusion immunotherapeutics to treat diseases promoted by chronic inflammation, including autoimmune diseases, cancer, and senescence-associated dysplasia. HCW Biologics is the leader in creation of multivalent immunotherapeutics with a unique protein-based scaffold, without antibody Fc domain. The Company's immunotherapeutics represent a new class of drugs that it believes have the potential to fundamentally change the treatment of proinflammatory and senescence-associated diseases and conditions that are promoted by chronic inflammation —and in doing so, improve patients' quality of life and possibly extend longevity. A key aspect of the Company's clinical development and financing strategy is to focus on its business development programs, including its commercial-ready reagents to be used in the production of immunotherapeutics for cancer and infectious diseases. To date, the Company has entered into two licensing agreements in which it has licensed exclusive, worldwide rights for some of its proprietary molecules. See the Company Pipeline at https://hcwbiologics.com/pipeline/

Forward Looking Statements:

Statements in this press release contain "forward-looking statements" that are subject to substantial risks and uncertainties. These statements are made under the "safe harbor" provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements contained in this press release may be identified by the use of words such as "anticipate," "expect," "believe," "will," "may," "should," "estimate," "project," "outlook," "forecast" or other similar words and include, the actual success and potency of the Company's TCE-based TRBC fusion molecules; the ability of the Company's TCE's to target cancer antigens, activate effector T cells, promote infiltration of immune cells into tumors, shrink tumors, and reduce immunosuppression in the tumor microenvironment; the ability of the Company's TCEs to induce/promote tertiary lymphoid structures ("TLS") formation in tumors; the ability of the Company's TCEs to exhibit potent and antigen-specific anti-cancer activities both *in vitro* and in humanized mouse models; effectiveness of the Company's TCEs in treatment of solid tumors; and the probability of receiving a favorable result from the submission of the IND for HCW11-018b based upon FDA Type B meeting response. Further, certain forward-looking statements are based on assumptions as to future events that may not prove to be accurate. Factors that could cause actual results to differ include, but are not limited to, the risks and uncertainties that are described in the section titled "Risk Factors" in the annual report on Form 10-K filed with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on March 31, 2026, and in other filings filed from time to time with the SEC.

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