Boehringer Ingelheim Strengthens its Commitment to Immune Therapy in Oncology with New Partnerships

Collaboration with CureVac seeks to develop next generation lung cancer immunotherapy

Boehringer Ingelheim is building on its recent regulatory successes in oncology and looking to the future with a global licence and development collaboration with CureVac, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company. The companies will work together to develop CV9202, a novel investigational therapeutic mRNA (messenger ribonucleic acid)-based vaccine, for the treatment of lung cancer.

CureVac is pioneering the development of mRNA-based technology, a potential novel approach in cancer treatment, which seeks to mobilise the patient’s own immune system to fight the tumour with a specific immune response elicited through the RNActive® vaccine.

Source: http://www.curevac.com/rna-technology/rnactive/

“We are very pleased to be partnering on this joint research programme with Prof. Chen and other scientific leaders in this innovative and emerging field. This alliance confirms our commitment to research in immune modulation and demonstrates our desire to work together with scientists around the world to bring new therapeutic options to patients.” said Dr. Michel Pairet, Senior Corporate Vice President of Research and Non-clinical Development at Boehringer Ingelheim.

Boehringer Ingelheim will start clinical investigation of CV9202 in at least two different lung cancer settings: in combination with afatinib in patients with advanced or metastatic epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) mutated non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and in combination with chemo-radiation therapy in patients with unresectable stage III NSCLC.

New research alliance with Yale University investigates novel therapeutic targets in the field of immune modulation

Boehringer Ingelheim and Yale University are working together in a research partnership to explore novel therapeutic targets in the field of immune modulation. Professor Lieping Chen, Director, Cancer Immunology Programme at Yale Cancer Centre, is leading a research team which will work with scientists at Boehringer Ingelheim to identify new co-stimulatory and co-inhibitory drug targets for oncology and other disease areas.

“Cancer immunotherapy represents one of the biggest innovations in cancer treatment of recent times and we are delighted to be working with Boehringer Ingelheim. The out-licensing and clinical development of our promising therapeutic vaccine CV9202 represents the logical next step in developing this novel treatment for cancer patients and the significant commitment from Boehringer Ingelheim underscores the relevance of the mRNA technology” commented Ingmar Hoerr, co-founder and CEO of CureVac GmbH.

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Boehringer Ingelheim Strengthens its Presence in Boston

Boehringer Ingelheim is expanding its presence in Boston, thereby aiming to increase its engagement with the extensive biotechnology community in the region. Boston already serves as the US base for the Boehringer Ingelheim Corporate Venture Fund, led by Martin Heidecker since October 2013. He is now joined by Imran Nasrallah, Director of Innovation Sourcing, who represents the therapeutic area partnering interests of the company. The office augments the comprehensive existing early research and partnering teams based at the company’s US facilities in Ridgefield, CT.

We are extremely pleased to be strengthening our presence at the heart of one of the leading life science hubs. Boston is the home to more than 650 biotechnology companies, universities and academic institutions and is a distinguished contributor to research and innovation in healthcare. Boehringer Ingelheim is proud to be part of this world-leading life sciences cluster and looks forward to working together for better health with others in this community”, commented Imran Nasrallah, Director of Innovation Sourcing.

For more information visit: https://partnering.boehringer-ingelheim.com

Exploring New Therapeutic Concepts in Ubiquitin Signalling Biology

Boehringer Ingelheim is working together with three research institutes to investigate new therapeutic targets in the field of ubiquitin signalling biology. The alliance with the University of Toronto, University Health Network and Mount Sinai Hospital will explore novel starting points for drug discovery in a multi-year research programme focusing on the development and characterisation of novel ubiquitin binding variants developed at the University of Toronto’s Recombinant Antibody Centre. Alterations of the ubiquitin system are linked to many common diseases including cancer. Boehringer Ingelheim scientists will work together with leading scientists in the Toronto academic community to explore different therapeutic concepts within the ubiquitin system, a highly attractive and potentially rich area of unprecedented drug targets.

Focus on... Immune Therapy for Oncology

Boehringer Ingelheim has a long-term commitment to advance the treatment of cancer through the discovery of novel treatment options with high therapeutic value and successfully launched its first oncology product in 2013.

- 32.6 million people are living with cancer worldwide
- 14 million new cancer cases are diagnosed worldwide every year
- 8.2 million people die from cancer worldwide every year

Working together with the international scientific community and our industry partners, scientists at our research and development centre for oncology in Vienna, Austria, are committed to discovering and developing novel cancer treatments. With extensive capabilities in both New Chemical Entity (NCE) and New Biological Entity (NBE) discovery, and the ambition to identify and translate the most promising scientific breakthroughs into clinical applications for patients across a wide range of cancers, Boehringer Ingelheim, together with its partners, is contributing to the search for novel therapeutic concepts, biomarkers, drug candidates and treatment modalities.

Our Immuno-Oncology partnering focus

We are seeking in-licensing and collaboration opportunities at research, pre-clinical and clinical stages, for therapeutic programmes exploring targets and concepts relevant for immune modulation:

Specifically our partnering priorities include:

- Toll like receptor agonists
- Redirected immune cell mediated lysis

Boehringer Ingelheim is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Clive Wood as Corporate Head of Research. Educated at Imperial College, University of London, he joins the company from Bayer Healthcare where he was responsible for biologics research, process development and clinical manufacturing at the company’s sites in Germany and the USA. Dr. Wood joins Boehringer Ingelheim at an exciting time. At the Annual Press Conference in April 2014, the company announced the expansion of its research programmes in both immunology and CNS diseases – two of its five key therapeutic areas.

Dr. Wood is also a believer in the importance of working together with external partners as a key contributing factor to developing a comprehensive pipeline. At a recent partnering event in San Francisco he commented:

“Discovering Innovative medicines requires us all to work together. It is important to me that we combine our company’s passion and expertise for science and innovation with an emphasis on building partnerships with academia and biotechnology companies based on shared goals and mutual respect. Boehringer Ingelheim is proud of its past performance and is building on this strong foundation.”

Clive Wood Appointed as New Corporate Head of Research

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Second Research and Development Collaboration with Zealand Pharma Builds on Companies’ Complementary Expertise

Boehringer Ingelheim and Pharma (Zealand) have once again combined their expertise and announced a second research and development agreement. This new four-and-a-half year partnership aims to advance a specific therapeutic peptide project with the intention of developing novel medicines to improve the treatment of patients with cardio-metabolic diseases. This new collaboration is an addition to a successful first partnership, established in 2011 and still ongoing, for the development and commercialisation of novel glucagon/GLP-1, dual-acting peptide therapeutics to treat patients with type 2 diabetes and/or obesity.

“Signing a second collaboration agreement with Boehringer Ingelheim is a clear demonstration of the strong relationship between our two companies. This new agreement covers a novel therapeutic approach in the cardio-metabolic disease area and leverages further Zealand’s expertise in the design and development of peptide therapeutics. The collaboration works very well and together with Boehringer Ingelheim we look forward to advancing the project towards selection of a first therapeutic candidate for development.”

Britt Meelby Jensen
President and CEO,
Zealand Pharma

For more information on how you can join us in working together for better health, please visit our website: https://partnering.boehringer-ingelheim.com