

PBS-Bio inks deals to speed up cancer drug development

By Alexandria Pešić, 21-Oct-2010

Predictive Biomarker Sciences (PBS-Bio) is collaborating with ENDECE, Revalesio and Unibioscreen to help bring new cancer drugs to the marketplace faster.

PBS-Bio will help the companies develop therapies against different cancers by highlighting the drugs' mechanism of action (MOA), finding biomarker candidates based on real-time biological data, and from there, identifying which patients will respond best to a drug.

PBS-Bio's technology is a live cell dynamic assay that places a green fluorescent reporter into live cells used to assess a candidate drug's mechanism of action (MOA) by highlighting signaling pathways in real-time.

Edward Smith, PBS-Bio CEO, told Outsourcing-Pharma, "*The dynamic, live-cell nature of the platform lets us show the drug developer exactly how their drug works molecularly, not just the simple target, but the complex signaling between genes and pathways, including cross talk and autocrine loops,*" something he claims "*has never been done before.*"

He suggested, "*The currently used process for discovering and developing drugs by seeing if a drug kills certain cancer cells is for the best part, a blind process, with no real understanding of the MOA,*" and most combination regimens are chosen through trial and error in clinical trials.

PBS-Bio's approach, Smith continued, can help drug firms make more effective preclinical-stage go/no go decisions about which candidates are taken into clinical development and reduce attrition rates.

"*We feel that one reason why drugs fail in late-stage studies is that most pharma companies do not know how their drugs work, and they don't know how to select susceptible patients,*" said Smith.

Cancer drug collaborators

Under the new collaborations, Arizona, US-based PBS-Bio will apply its technology in a number of specific ways.

In the first agreement, with cancer drug discovery and development firm ENDECE, the platform will be used to identify key molecular switches that prevent tumours from growing out of control using its lead compound NDC-1308.

In the second deal, PBS-Bio will work with Revalesio Corporation, developers of therapeutic candidates containing 'charged-stabilised nanostructures' to target inflammation associated with cancer and other diseases.

This partnership will examine cell-survival in various cancer lines, specifically looking at signaling pathways to inflammatory processes and proliferation signaling in oncology.

The final accord will see PBS-Bio assist Unibioscreen's development of an anti-cancer drug, UNBS1450, by elucidating its mode of action and helping define patients in whom the drug will be most effective.

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