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Dr James Allison & Dr Padmanee Sharma join Hummingbird Bioscience

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In partnership with Dr. Allison, Dr. Sharma is currently exploring combinations of immunological therapies



Hummingbird Bioscience, a systems-biology enabled biotech company focused on the discovery and development of cancer therapeutics has announced that James P. Allison, Ph.D. and Padmanee Sharma, M.D., Ph.D., have joined its Scientific Advisory Board.

Dr. Allison has spent his career studying the regulation of T cell responses. In 2018, he shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discovery of cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation. Dr. Allison's work led to the development of an antibody to human CTLA-4 called ipilimumab which became the first immune checkpoint blockade therapy ever approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The approval of ipilimumab cleared the path for the emerging field of immune checkpoint blockade therapy in the treatment of cancer. His current work is focused on improving immune checkpoint blockade therapies and identifying new targets to unleash the immune system and eradicate cancer.

A scientific leader in oncology, specializing in renal, bladder and prostate cancer, Dr. Sharma is focused on understanding resistance mechanisms within the immune system that impact anti-tumor responses. For more than a decade, she has been a principal investigator for multiple clinical trials to improve the efficacy of cancer immunotherapies.

Dr. Sharma's work on new pathways to treat prostate cancer implicated for the first time in a human tumor the checkpoint VISTA in inhibiting immune responses.

Dr. Sharma is a professor of Genitourinary Medical Oncology and Immunology in the Division of Cancer Medicine, the T.C. and Jeanette Hsu Endowed Chair in Cell Biology, the Scientific Director of the Immunotherapy Platform and the Co-Director of the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Dr Allison added, "I am pleased to join the Scientific Advisory Board of Hummingbird Bioscience at this exciting moment in the development of its pipeline. We have a unique opportunity to explore the potential of its anti-VISTA antibody, which was identified through Hummingbird's rational antibody discovery approach to developing new oncology drug candidates."

Dr Sharma said, "It is wonderful opportunity to be a part of the Hummingbird Bioscience Scientific Advisory Board. Among various VISTA molecules in development globally, Hummingbird's HMBD-002-V4 is particularly interesting because it binds a uniquely differentiated and species conserved epitope to neutralize VISTA activity and in doing so has the potential to potently inhibit tumor growth by remodelling an immunosuppressive tumor microenvironment."

Piers Ingram, CEO of Hummingbird Bioscience said, “We are delighted and honoured to have Drs. Allison and Sharma join our board of scientific advisors. Their deep experience and tremendous track record in oncology and immunotherapy will undoubtedly strengthen and enhance our scientific development of new antibody therapies.”

In partnership with Dr. Allison, Dr. Sharma is currently exploring combinations of immunological therapies and targeted drugs in preclinical studies to treat a variety of cancers more effectively.