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Chugai extends R&D collaboration in Singapore earmarking S$282M over next 5 years

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Celebrates 10 Years of research and collaboration in Singapore with S$437 million investment by 2021 bringing breakthrough therapeutic antibody drugs to global unmet medical needs



The Japanese company Chugai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., which owns and operates a fully-owned research center "Chugai Pharmabody Research Pte. Ltd. (“CPR”)" in Singapore, celebrated its 10th anniversary on 16 November, 2022.

Over the past decade of its presence in Singapore, Chugai has invested S$437 million in CPR’s R&D activities, with an additional S$282 million earmarked for the next five years. This will accelerate CPR’s capabilities in cutting-edge antibody engineering technologies as well as its research in mid-size molecule drugs, which Chugai focuses on as the third modality after small molecules and antibodies. The milestone reaffirms Chugai’s commitment to introduce innovative medical solutions for the global community.

CPR continues to pursue significant research projects, with notable drug canidates such as crovalimab (SKY59) deploying its innovative state-of-the art proprietary technologies. Crovalimab is a humanized complement inhibitor C5 monoclonal antibody discovered by Chugai. F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. (“Roche”) is responsible for the development of crovalimab outside Japan and Taiwan.

Currently in the final stages of global clinical trials, Crovalimab is being tested for treating paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH), a rare and serious blood disorder caused by abnormal destruction of red blood cells by the complement system. This potential drug could become the first Singapore-derived monoclonal therapeutic antibody to receive global regulatory approval.

In China, crovalimab was designated as a Breakthrough Therapy for PNH in July 2021. The first new drug application was submitted by Roche China in Q3 2022 ahead of the world, based on positive results from a dedicated, single-arm clinical trial conducted in the country. The application is currently under priority review.

Hideaki Shimada, CEO of CPR says “Over the past 10 years, being part of Singapore’s world-class biomedical ecosystem and our collaborations with multidisciplinary and multinational scientists based here have helped us make excellent progress in our work.”

Furthur, CPR’s collaborations with Singapore’s scientific agencies such as A*STAR contribute greatly to its pioneering research. Over the past ten years, Chugai and A*STAR conducted multiple joint research projects on therapeutic antibodies for COVID-19, dengue fever and other diseases.

“CPR owns a world-class superior platform for drug discovery and today we bear witness to its successes, as Singapore’s rich R&D environment helps bolster the growth of pharmaceutical companies like Chugai,” explaines CPR’s Chairman and former Chief Scientist for A*STAR, Sir David Lane.

“I continue to look forward to being part of the efforts to expand the pipeline of new and novel products to help patients in their fight against disease and support Singapore’s work as an international research hub” adds Sir David Lane.

Chugai has tripled its workforce to 150 employees, including scientists from around the world with multidisciplinary backgrounds as part of its ongoing commitment to Singapore.

Image Caption: (Left to Right)

*Sir David Lane, Chairman, CRP; Former Chief Scientist for A*STAR*
Dr. Hisafumi Yamada: Executive Vice President (R&D), Chugai
Dr. Hideaki Shimada, CEO, CPR
Dr Hitoshi likura, Vice President, Head of Research Division, Chugai