

Japanese biomedical firm sets up lab in Singapore

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Singapore: Japan-based biopharmaceutical firm, Kyowa Hakko Kirin (KHK) has setup Singapore Translational Research Laboratory (STRL), an international R&D center in Singapore for biomedical sciences that will be instrumental KHK's global R&D efforts in translational research.

KKSG has also initiated research collaboration with Cancer Science Institute of Singapore (CSI Singapore) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore (NCIS) to jointly conduct oncology translational research in Singapore. This industry collaboration was structured and negotiated by NUS Industry Liaison Office, part of NUS Enterprise.

STRL has initiated a joint collaborative research project with both NUS and NCIS. Under this project, STRL, CSI Singapore and the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at NUS, together with NCIS and the National University Hospital (NUH) will jointly conduct pre-clinical research on bio molecular drugs developed by KHK and will explore biomarker candidates, which could facilitate and accelerate future clinical trials.

"We recognize Singapore's strong expertise in oncology translational research and look forward to expanding our translational research programmes into the country. We are confident that this collaboration with CSI Singapore and NCIS will greatly accelerate our drug development programme and enhance the therapeutic value of our drug candidate. We also look forward to partnerships and collaborations with other research groups in Singapore and beyond," said Dr Hiroshi Okazaki, VP and head, research division, KHK.

"We are excited by this highly synergistic alliance. Leveraging on the expertise from the industry and academia, this initiative will generate vital pre-clinical and clinical knowledge needed to bring new drugs to our cancer patients," said Dr Yong Wei Peng, senior consultant in the Department of Haematology-Oncology at NCIS. He is the lead principal investigator for the research.

Through this research collaboration, NCIS aims to find better ways to screen, diagnose and treat cancer. Today, cancer

research and education efforts on campus are spearheaded by NCIS and CSI. This partnership will enable clinicians and scientists to work on high quality research projects and develop new therapeutic strategies which will benefit Asian patients.

"The establishment of KHK's STRL is an excellent example of companies leveraging Singapore's translational and clinical research ecosystem to accelerate the drug discovery and development process. We are delighted that KHK has chosen to work with Singapore, and we will continue to enhance our infrastructure and capabilities to enable companies to conduct translational research", said Mr Kevin Lai, director Biomedical Sciences, Singapore Economic Development Board.