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ASIA EDITION

SK bioscience inks KRW 75.5 B deal with Sanofi to develop next-gen pneumococcal conjugate vaccines

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Companies aim to target a global market valued at KRW 20.7 trillion



South Korea-based SK bioscience and French pharmaceutical firm Sanofi have announced the signing of an expanded agreement to co-develop next-generation pneumococcal conjugate vaccines (PCVs) for both paediatric and adult populations, with the potential to provide broader protection than those currently licensed.

This agreement builds on the companies' existing collaboration to develop and commercialise the GBP410, a 21-valent pneumococcal conjugate paediatric vaccine candidate. Together, the companies aim to develop innovative next-generation PCVs beyond GBP410.

At the same time, SK bioscience and Sanofi are one step closer to commercialising GBP410 by initiating the phase 3 clinical programme. GBP410 is the first pneumococcal conjugate vaccine candidate with more than 20 serotypes to enter phase 3 in infants and toddlers, making it a highly anticipated innovation in the market.

Under the terms of the agreement to co-develop next-generation PCVs, Sanofi will pay SK bioscience an upfront payment of EUR 50 million (KRW 75.5 billion) followed by development and commercial milestone payments.

The research and development costs for the vaccine will be shared equally by the two companies, while Sanofi will bear all costs related to commercialisation. Once registered, SK bioscience will have commercial exclusivity in Korea, while Sanofi will commercialise the vaccines in all other markets. SK bioscience will receive royalty payments on product sales outside South Korea.

The two companies have also agreed to co-develop next-generation PCVs for not only paediatric but also adult populations.