BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Australia Advances Cancer Research with Kazia's ABC-Pax Trial for Triple-Negative Breast Cancer

January 31, 2025 | News

Kazia Therapeutics launches a pioneering clinical trial in Queensland, combining paxalisib with immunotherapy to target aggressive and treatment-resistant breast cancer, aiming to enhance survival and precision medicine insights.



Kazia Therapeutics Limited , an oncology-focused drug development company, has announced the regulatory approval and launch of the **ABC-Pax** (Advanced Breast Cancer – Paxalisib) clinical trial. This **first-of-its-kind** study evaluates the combination of **paxalisib** and **immunotherapy** in patients with **triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC)**—one of the most aggressive and treatment-resistant forms of the disease.

ABC-Pax is a **multi-centre, open-label Phase 1b trial** that will assess the safety and efficacy of paxalisib in combination with **KEYTRUDA® (pembrolizumab) or LYNPARZA® (olaparib)**. The study, conducted at leading cancer centers in **Queensland, Australia**, aims to enroll **24 patients**, who will receive the combination therapy for up to **12 months**.

This trial builds on groundbreaking research led by **QIMR Berghofer** scientists, in collaboration with **Kazia Therapeutics**, demonstrating that paxalisib combined with immunotherapy triggers **epigenetic reprogramming** of dormant cancer cells. This mechanism enhances immune system recognition and tumor eradication, a strategy showcased in preclinical data presented at the **San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (December 12, 2024).**

Dr. **John Friend, CEO of Kazia Therapeutics**, emphasized the study's potential impact:
"The novel combination of paxalisib and immunotherapy represents a significant step forward in the treatment of aggressive breast cancers. We are excited to support this pioneering clinical study and advance therapeutic options for patients."

Professor **Sudha Rao** of QIMR Berghofer highlighted the urgency of innovation in TNBC treatment:
"There is currently no cure for triple-negative breast cancer, and patient survival remains distressingly low. This study seeks to extend survival and improve quality of life by targeting dormant cancer cells and reactivating the immune system."

The **ABC-Pax trial** will also incorporate a **liquid biopsy digital pathology platform**, developed by Professor Rao's team, enabling real-time monitoring of cancer and immune cell behavior from blood samples—offering a **breakthrough in precision medicine.**

The trial is now open for enrollment at the **Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital**, with plans to expand to additional sites in Australia.