

Ono Pharma and Vertex to commercialise Povetacept in Japan and South Korea for nephropathy treatment

24 June 2025 | News

For Povetacept as a therapeutic in development for multiple serious B cell-mediated diseases



Japan-based Ono Pharmaceutical Co., and Vertex Pharmaceuticals Incorporated, in the US, have announced an exclusive collaboration and license agreement for the development and commercialisation of Vertex's povetacept in Japan and South Korea.

Povetacept is a recombinant fusion protein therapeutic and dual antagonist of the BAFF (B cell activating factor) and APRIL (a proliferation inducing ligand) cytokines with best-in-class potential being studied for the treatment of immunoglobulin A nephropathy (IgAN), primary membranous nephropathy (pMN) and other serious B cell-mediated diseases.

Under the terms of the agreement, Ono will pay Vertex an upfront payment, as well as certain regulatory and commercial milestone payments and tiered royalties.

Ono will utilise its extensive development expertise to help advance Vertex's clinical trials for povetacept and will be responsible for obtaining marketing authorizations in Japan and South Korea. Following approval, Ono will be solely responsible for commercialising povetacept in these regions. The agreement includes povetacept for both IgAN and pMN, with the potential to add other indications.

IgAN is a serious, progressive, life-threatening, B cell-mediated chronic kidney disease that is the most common cause of primary (idiopathic) glomerulonephritis, affecting approximately 300,000 people in the United States and Europe. It is estimated that there are approximately 33,000 diagnosed patients in Japan.