

A*STAR, GSK develop medicines for emerging markets

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Singapore: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and A*STAR's Institute of Chemical and Engineering Sciences (ICES) have signed a five-year strategic agreement to develop new evidence based formulations (EBFs) specifically for emerging markets. EBFs are medicines which are reformulated to provide additional patient benefit.

EBF's are often fixed-dose combinations of active drugs or new formulations with different pharmacokinetic properties, new routes of delivery, or improved safety profiles. EBF's are also referred to as Value Added Formulations, or Incrementally Modified Drugs.

ICES has a long standing relationship with GSK since 2003, and the development of EBFs will further strengthen the relationship between both parties. The collaboration leverages on ICES' strengths and expertise in synthesis, formulation and process development, as well as GSK's vast experience in drug candidate selection, optimisation, and product development in novel formulations. The collaboration will enhance ICES' technical expertise and know-how in drug product formulation, analytical techniques, development and scale up. It will develop a pool of local expertise in specialised formulation for pharmaceutical development in Singapore.

"Collaborating with GSK, a global leader in pharmaceuticals and healthcare provides an opportunity for us to further our research and deepen our capabilities in formulation science with skilled scientists and technical expertise. This venture will enable us to develop future scientists and laboratory analysts with the right skills to grow this industry in Singapore" said Dr Keith Carpenter, Executive Director, ICES.

The establishment of a joint partnership between ICES and GSK will position Singapore as a regional centre for drug development for the emerging markets.

"This agreement with ICES is perfectly aligned with GSK's strategic priority of growing a diversified global business, whilst bringing affordable, quality GSK medicines of value to more people who need them. Within GSK's portfolio of off-patent products, EBFs are an important part of our growth strategy, and our hope is that together with ICES we will create a sustainable, scalable model to meet both specific market conditions and patient requirements," commented Mr. Duncan McKay, Vice President, Emerging Markets & Asia Pacific R&D, GSK.

"We are pleased that GSK has chosen Singapore as a strategic partner to develop new evidenced-based drug formulations. This is a strong endorsement of Singapore's scientific talent and capabilities. It also further reinforces Singapore's offering as the base for companies to generate insights and develop new solutions and market access strategies for the fast growing emerging markets," said Mr. Kevin Lai , Director, Biomedical Sciences, Singapore Economic Development Board.