

Amgen forms JV to launch cancer drug in China

21 May 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: US-based Amgen is going to enter into a joint venture with Chinese pharmaceutical firm Zhejiang Beta Pharma, in which Amgen will own 49 percent of interest. The new firm will be named Amgen-Beta Pharmaceuticals and will help bring Amgen's colon cancer drug Vectibix to the Chinese market. Vectibix is a prescription medicine used for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer.

The joint venture will benefit from Beta Pharma's strong expertise in the development and commercialization of molecularly targeted therapy, and its industry leading oncology sales network in China, and will also benefit from Amgen's global expertise in the development and manufacturing of human therapeutics.

Dr Anthony Hooper, executive VP, Amgen, said that, "This joint venture brings us one step closer to providing Chinese patients with Amgen's medicines and supports our strategy of expanding in key, fast-growing markets.

Ms Mary Klem, communications, Latin America and Asia, Amgen, said that, "Amgen is a pioneer and a global leader in the biotech industry and we believe that, with our experience and expertise, we can be a strong partner for China's efforts to achieve its growth goals in the field of biotechnology. There are multiple synergies between the Chinese government and Amgen and we look forward to exploring these further. Some of our innovative medicines are already available to the people of China through partner companies, but we are now ready to expand our commitment by building an Amgen business in China."

Furthermore, Amgen is focussing on building the its China team. In addition to its China headquarters in Shanghai, the company recently opened a regulatory office in Beijing. It has also been conducting clinical trials in the region for several years through a small regional clinical trial team. The company has a multi-pronged strategy for China that includes establishing an R&D presence and local manufacturing when needed, and is exploring partnerships and acquisitions to accelerate its commercial presence.