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ASIA EDITION

Japan's Nxera Pharma inks agreement worth $1.47 B with AbbVie for IBD drug

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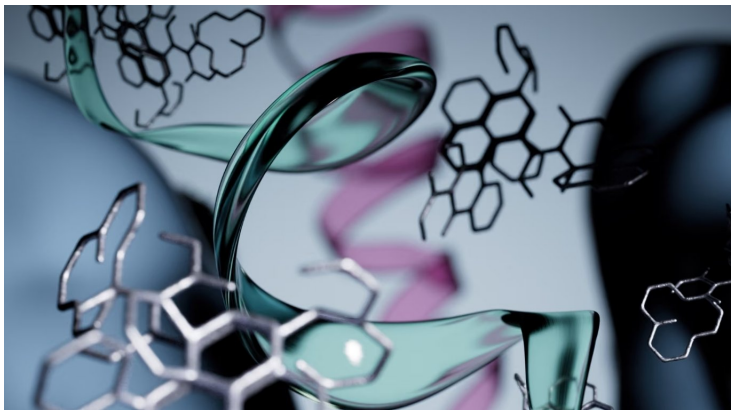
NXE0033744, is a potential first-in-class candidate for inflammatory bowel disease



Japan-based Nxera Pharma has announced that its subsidiary, Nxera Pharma UK, has entered into an exclusive global license agreement, with US-based AbbVie Inc. for Nxera's EP4 agonist programme including NXE0033744, a novel small molecule EP4 receptor agonist discovered by Nxera. Under the agreement, AbbVie will receive exclusive rights to develop and commercialise NXE0033744 worldwide in inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Under the terms of the agreement, Nxera will receive an upfront payment of $100 million. Nxera is also eligible to receive up to an additional $1.37 billion in development and commercial milestone payments, plus tiered royalties on net sales. This transaction is subject to customary antitrust clearances including the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act. The $100 million upfront payment will represent a material positive revenue impact to Nxera, and is expected to be recognised as revenue in the fourth quarter of the financial year ended December 31, 2026, subject to agreement with the Group's auditors.

NXE0033744 is an investigational oral EP4 receptor agonist for the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease discovered using Nxera's proprietary NxWave™ drug discovery platform. NXE0033744 aims to address the significant unmet need of people with IBD that do not achieve satisfactory disease control.

It is designed to selectively activate EP4 receptors locally in the gastrointestinal tract to induce anti-inflammatory effects and to promote epithelial barrier homeostasis and mucosal healing, potentially offering a differentiated mechanism of action from existing treatments. A Phase 1 study has been successfully completed, generating data supporting a gut-selective profile and target engagement.