Lambda Research Newsletter

June 2022

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GLOBAL NEWS

1. Biochemistry researchers repair and regenerate heart muscle cells

Researchers at the University of Houston are reporting a first-of-its-kind technology that not only repairs heart muscle cells in mice but also regenerates them following a heart attack, or myocardial infarction as its medically known.

The new technology developed by the team of researchers uses synthetic messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) to deliver mutated transcription factors -- proteins that control the conversion of DNA into RNA -- to mouse hearts.

It is first time as no one has been able to do this to this extent and it could become a possible treatment for humans

Synthetic mRNA Contributes to Stem Cell-Like Growth

- Two mutated transcription factors, Stemin and YAP5SA, work in tandem to increase the replication of cardiomyocytes, or heart muscle cells, isolated from mouse hearts. These experiments were conducted in vitro on tissue culture dishes.
- Stemin turns on stem cell-like properties from cardiomyocytes. Meanwhile, YAP5SA works by promoting organ growth that causes the myocytes to replicate even more.

A Limited Number of Cardiomyocytes

- This is a huge study in heart regeneration especially given the smart strategy of using mRNA to deliver Stemin and YAP5SA.
- The findings are especially important because less than 1% of adult cardiac muscle cells can regenerate. "Most people die with most of the same cardiomyocytes they had in the first month of life. When there is a heart attack and heart muscle cells die, the contracting ability of the heart can be lost.

Source: The Journal of Cardiovascular Aging, 2022; 2 (3): 29 DOI: 10.20517/jca.2022.17

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GLOBAL NEWS

2. Biomarkers found that could be drug targets against a deadly form of brain cancer

Biomarkers that could be targets for novel drugs to treat glioblastoma brain tumors have been identified by investigators at Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, providing hope for a cancer that is highly lethal.
Currently, the drug most often used to treat glioblastoma, temozolomide, is uniquely able to cross the blood/brain barrier to attack the tumor but resistance develops rapidly, and many patients do not survive for more than a year after diagnosis. This new finding provides early evidence that there may be a benefit in targeting specific alterations in cancer cells with newer agents once a patient's tumor becomes resistant to temozolomide.
The finding appeared June 22, 2022, in Science Advances.

Source: worldpharmanews.com

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GLOBAL NEWS

3. Mechanism leading to drug resistance in prostate cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in the United States. Many patients can live long lives due to early detection and treatment with androgen deprivation therapy. However, despite the benefits of this therapy, almost all patients will eventually develop drug resistance and recurrent disease.

In a new article published in Science Translational Medicine, Moffitt Cancer Center researchers reveal a mechanism by which prostate cancer cells become resistant through molecular modification of the androgen receptor protein and identify a potential treatment approach that could overcome this resistance.

Source: sciencedaily.com

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GLOBAL NEWS

4. Novel approach identifies highly specific anti-cancer compounds

Researchers at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital have identified potent, highly specific compounds that interfere with bromodomain (BD)-containing proteins involved in cancer. The compounds, called BET BD1-inhibitors, are a starting point in the development of potentially more effective anti-cancer drugs with less side effects.

The team reports in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that the novel approach developed at Baylor's Center for Drug Discovery (CDD) enables the screening of billions of compounds at once and precisely identifies potent drug-like molecules that bind to the cancer protein of interest. One key advantage of this approach is the price tag -- these screens are a fraction of the cost of previous methods. In laboratory experiments with cells, the new BD1-inhibitors had marked anti-leukemic activity.

Source: sciencedaily.com

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PHARMA INDIA

1. Exergen launches TAT-2000 and TAT-2000C thermometers in India

Exergen Corporation has recently launched TAT-2000 (temporal artery thermometer) for professionals and TAT 2000C for consumers at the Medical Fair in Mumbai. The TAT 2000 is Exergen's newest Temporal Artery Thermometer. TAT is targeted for medical professionals in schools, nursing homes, hospitals and healthcare facilities and it comes with several years of warranty.

The housing of TAT-2000 is made of an internally developed super plastic and it takes measurement in 3-5 seconds. TAT performs a perfect measurement in a gentle swipe across the forehead.

Source: pharmabiz.com

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PHARMA INDIA

2. CDSCO classifies 214 medical devices in various segments under Medical Devices Rule, 2017

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has announced the classification of around 214 medical devices in various therapeutic segments, as part of its efforts to bring in the medical devices under the prescribed rules in the country.

The medical devices pertaining to dental and obstetrical & gynaecological treatment have been classified under the provisions of the Medical Devices Rules 2017, through different notifications.

Source: thehealthmaster.com

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PHARMA INDIA

3. Mexico looking for India to procure essential drugs

The Mexican government is looking for Indian drug exporters having Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certificates from stringent regulatory authorities in the United States, European Union, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Canada and Australia to procure essential drugs.

The drugs include paracetamol, hydrocortisone & methylprednisolone injectable solution, phenytoin, heparin injectable solution, alibour powder, aluminum and magnesium chewable tablet, conjugated estrogens, atosiban injectable solution, nitrofural ovule, hydralazine injectable solution, dextromethorphan syrup, prednisolone-sulfacetamide, oxcarbazepine, glucose, sodium chloride, polygelin, glyceryl trinitrate, dinoprostone. Gel, erythropoietin, amino acids, lapatinib, mifepristone, ibuprofen, levomepromazine, tramadol, somatropin, morphine etc.

The Mexican Institute of Health and Wellness (INSABI) last week launched a new tender process for procuring above medicines which will help the Mexican government widen the range of suppliers in the public health sector

Source: pharmabiz.com

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PHARMA INDIA

4. 63-year-old woman gets India's first Sapien3 transcatheter tricuspid valve replacement at Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital

Doctors at Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital have performed India's first Sapien3 Transcatheter Tricuspid Valve Replacement (TTVR) on a 63 -year-old woman in Mumbai.

With an existing pace maker and a previous open-heart surgery done for replacing the tricuspid valve with a tissue valve, this was a valve-in-valve procedure making it further a very complex and rare procedure. The TTVR was performed by Dr Maulik Parekh, head - structural heart programme along with an expert team of doctors at Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital.

The initial open-heart surgery was first done in 2005 for narrowing of the tricuspid valve. After 15 years of the surgery, Prafulla Shah started feeling breathless frequently. In the past 6 months the patient's condition deteriorated to the point where she was unable to walk more than a few steps. The old surgical valve had degenerated, making the patient breathless in just a few steps.

Source: pharmabiz.com

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REGULATORY ROUND-UP

1. Positive MHRA decision for Briviact

UCB has announced that the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has approved a label extension for seizure treatment, Briviact – also known as brivaracetam. The conclusion arrived after pioneering, group-specific data was used during the decision-making process.

Briviact is used as adjunctive therapy for the treatment of partial-onset seizures with or without secondary generalisation in patients from two to four years of age in Britain.
The MHRA decision follows existing European Medicines Agency's (EMA) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) approval.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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REGULATORY ROUND-UP

2. NICE Rejects Fampyra for Multiple Sclerosis

The UK's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has declined to recommend Acorda Therapeutics' multiple sclerosis drug Fampyra (fampridine) for National Health Service (NHS) use.

NICE said the drug, which it previously rejected in a draft decision in 2021, is not cost-effective for the patient population, but that patients who had already managed to get the drug from the NHS could carry on taking it. Patients with private Prescriptions pay between $260 and $790 per month for the drug.

Fampridine is a potassium channel blocker that acts on damaged nerves, allowing electrical impulses to travel along the nerves to stimulate the muscles, making it easier to walk.

Source: fdanews.com

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REGULATORY ROUND-UP

3. FDA panel recommends redesigned Covid booster shots for the fall

The next round of Covid booster shots should be modified to target the supercontagious omicron variant, a Food and Drug Administration advisory committee recommended on Tuesday.

The vote capped off a daylong meeting in which the panel members grappled with how to get ahead of a virus that has outsmarted us for more than two years.

The Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee voted 19-2 in favor of recommending that booster shots include a component that targets the omicron variant.

Source: nbcnews.com

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REGULATORY ROUND-UP

4. WHO updates recommendation for malaria chemoprevention among children and pregnant women

World Health Organization (WHO) has updated it recommendations for 3 key malaria prevention strategies: seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC), perennial malaria chemoprevention (PMC – previously known as intermittent preventive treatment in infants, or IPTi) and intermittent preventive treatment of malaria in pregnancy (IPTp). When given to the young children and pregnant women who are most vulnerable to malaria, preventive chemotherapy has been shown to be a safe, effective and cost-effective strategy for reducing the disease burden and saving lives.

National malaria control programmes have adopted and implemented chemoprevention strategies for young children over the past decade, and for even longer for pregnant women. In 2020, WHO convened a group of leading malaria experts to consider more than 10 years of evidence and operational experience on these interventions.

Source: pharmabiz.com

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MERGERS /ACQUISITIONS /COLLABORATIONS

1. Nordic Bioscience and Roche strengthen collaboration

Nordic Bioscience has announced the strengthening of its ongoing collaboration with Roche for the development of proprietary biomarkers involved in tissue breakdown and build-up.

Nordic typically concentrates on extra cellular matrix biomarker development, providing objective decision-making for compound selection in clinical trials.

As part of the collaboration, Nordic will transfer proprietary blood-based biomarkers to Roche in order to be implemented on the automated COBAS platform. Nordic's's biomarkers are unique and essential for all chronic diseases involving tissue fibrosis and inflammation.

The link-up will also facilitate better clinical decisions in drug development and patient selection, as well as boosting precision medicine and ultimately improving patient outcomes.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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MERGERS /ACQUISITIONS /COLLABORATIONS

2. Coave Therapeutics and ABL enter strategic collaboration to develop its gene therapy manufacturing processes

Coave Therapeutics and ABL have entered a strategic collaboration to develop gene therapy manufacturing processes. According to reports, the companies under the two-stage collaboration, will initially combine their expertise to co-develop manufacturing technologies for adeno-associated virus (AAV)-based gene therapy products. Meanwhile, ABL and Coave's process development teams will work jointly at ABL's state-of-the-art good manufacturing practice facility in Lyon, France.

The second stage of the collaboration provides Coave with an option to secure process development capacity and laboratory space within the aforementioned facility.

Source: financialexpress.com

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MERGERS /ACQUISITIONS /COLLABORATIONS

3. Ziphius Vaccines and University of Antwerp begin collaboration

Ziphius Vaccines and the University of Antwerp have announced that they have entered into a collaboration agreement to research and develop a dynamic lipid library for optimised delivery systems of ribonucleic acid (RNA) based drugs and therapeutics.

Ziphus specialises in developing transformative self-amplifying RNA medicinal products for vaccine and therapeutic applications

The safe and effective delivery of nucleic acids into the cell is one of the biggest challenges for the development and production of mRNA-based drugs. Also, Ziphius' delivery platform employs the cutting-edge lipid nanoparticle (LNP) technology to specifically design saRNA carriers that ensure proper encapsulation, stability and biodegradability of the LNP-saRNA complex.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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MERGERS /ACQUISITIONS /COLLABORATIONS

4. Jazz and Redx in milestone inhibitor agreement

Ireland-based Jazz Pharmaceuticals and Redx have announced that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has cleared an application for JZP815.

The therapy is a pan-RAF inhibitor for the treatment of solid tumours and haematologic malignancies that contain mutations in the MAPK pathway. This enables Jazz to proceed with initiating a clinical trial for JZP815, resulting in a payment of $5m from Jazz to Redx.

The milestone sum was triggered under the agreement in which Jazz acquired Redx's pan-RAF inhibitor programme, which was announced on 10 July 2019. Redx carried out development activities up to the completion of IND-enabling studies and the payment comes on top of $6.5m already received under the collaboration

Source: pharmatimes.com

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DRUGS: APPROVALS AND LAUNCHES

1. Novartis lung cancer drug Tabrecta gets approval

Novartis has announced that the European Commission (EC) has approved Tabrecta – also known as capmatinib – as a monotherapy for the treatment of adults with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

Novartis has announced that the European Commission (EC) has approved Tabrecta – also known as capmatinib – as a monotherapy for the treatment of adults with advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

The approval is based on results from the phase 2 GEOMETRY mono-1 trial that demonstrated positive overall response rates among adult patients with advanced NSCLC whose tumours had alterations leading to METex14 skipping.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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DRUGS: APPROVALS AND LAUNCHES

2. Teva UK introduces first generic oral anticoagulant

Teva UK has launched a generic version of apixaban, an oral anticoagulant that directly inhibits factor X – factor Xa – thus restricting thrombin formation and the development of blood clots.

It will be made available as a preventative treatment for stroke and systemic embolism in adults with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (NVAF), with one or more risk factors. These factors include history of strokes or transient ischaemic attacks (TIA) and the treatment of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE), and the prevention of recurrent DVT and PE in adults.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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DRUGS: APPROVALS AND LAUNCHES

3. AbbVie's Skyrizi Becomes First FDA-Approved IL-23 Inhibitor for Crohn's Disease

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has awarded its first approval in the specific interleukin-23 inhibitor space for use in adults with moderately to severely active Crohn's disease to AbbVie's Skyrizi (risakizumab-rzaa).

The drug works by blocking IL-23 by binding to its p19 subunit. IL-23 is active in inflammatory processes observed in many chronic immune-mediated illnesses.

PHESGO will come in a single vial for subcutaneous (under the skin) injection compared to existing therapy where Perjeta and Herceptin come in as two separate drugs, and are to be given through intravenous infusion (IV).

Source: biospace.com

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DRUGS: APPROVALS AND LAUNCHES

4. FDA Approves GSK's MMR Vaccine

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) announced on June 6, 2022 that FDA has approved its vaccine, Priorix, for the prevention of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) in individuals 12 months of age and older.

MMR vaccines are recommended in a two-dose series, the first at 12–15 months and the second between ages 4 and 6.

Although Priorix has been on the market for 25 years and is available in more than 100 countries, including all of Europe, its new availability in the US provides another MMR vaccine option that will directly compete with Merck's M-M-R II vaccine.

The approval of Priorix is based on six studies comprising 12,151 people, with more than half in the US, and 4,418 children aged 12–15 months, and the study showed comparable efficacy and side effects to Merck's M-M-R II vaccine.

Source: pharmanewsintel.com

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DRUGS: DEVELOPMENT & CLINICAL TRIALS

1. Improved outcome for prostate cancer patients in Phase III PROpel trial

PROpel was a randomised, double-blind Phase III trial testing AstraZeneca and Merck's Lynparza (Olaparib) in combination with abiraterone plus prednisone versus standard-of-care abiraterone plus prednisone as a first-line treatment for men with metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC) with or without homologous recombinant repair (HRR) gene mutations.

As previously reported, in the Phase III PROpel trial, Lynparza in combination with abiraterone plus prednisone (n=399) reduced the risk of disease progression or death by 34 percent (HR=0.66 [95 percent CI, 0.54-0.81]; p<0.0001) versus abiraterone plus prednisone and placebo (n=397). Median rPFS was 24.8 months for LYNPARZA plus abiraterone versus 16.6 months for abiraterone.

Source: europeanpharmaceuticalreview.com

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DRUGS: DEVELOPMENT & CLINICAL TRIALS

2. Merck's positive results from phase 1/2 study of pneumococcal vaccine

Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, announced the presentation of positive results from the Phase 1/2 study, V116-001, evaluating the safety, tolerability and immunogenicity of V116, the company's investigational 21-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV), in pneumococcal vaccine-naive adults 18-49 years of age (Phase 1) and 50 years of age and older (Phase 2).

In both populations, V116 met the primary immunogenicity objectives and was well-tolerated with an overall safety profile generally comparable to PNEUMOVAX®23 (Pneumococcal Vaccine Polyvalent) across age groups.

In the Phase 2 part of the study, V116 demonstrated non-inferior immune responses to PNEUMOVAX 23 for all shared serotypes, and superior immune responses for the serotypes included in V116 but not included in PNEUMOVAX 23, based on study-defined criteria. Responses were measured 30 days post-vaccination by serotype-specific opsonophagocytic activity (OPA) geometric mean titers (GMTs), a measure of functional antibody activity.

Source: merck.com

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DRUGS: DEVELOPMENT & CLINICAL TRIALS

3. Bristol Myers Squibb to present positive results from phase 2 PAISLEY study of deucravacitinib to treat SLE in EULAR 2022

Bristol Myers Squibb announced positive results from the phase 2 PAISLEY study evaluating deucravacitinib, an oral, selective, allosteric tyrosine kinase 2 (TYK2) inhibitor, compared to placebo in patients with moderate to severe systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE).

The study met the primary endpoint of achieving SLE Responder Index-4 (SRI(4)) responses, a composite endpoint used in SLE clinical trials to assess disease activity, at Week 32. A significantly greater proportion of patients on deucravacitinib 3 mg twice daily (BID) and 6 mg BID achieved SRI(4) at 32 weeks versus placebo (deucravacitinib 3 mg BID: 58.2%, P=0.0006; deucravacitinib 6 mg BID: 49.5%, P=0.0210; placebo: 34.4%). While the 12 mg once daily (QD) group had numerically higher SRI(4) responses relative to placebo at 32 weeks, the results did not reach statistical significance on multiplicity adjustment. SRI(4) responses were sustained across all deucravacitinib groups up to Week 48.

Secondary endpoints demonstrated clinically meaningful improvements at Week 48, including SRI(4), British Isles Lupus Assessment Group-based Composite Lupus Assessment (BICLA), Lupus Low Disease Activity State (LLDAS), decrease of =50% from baseline Cutaneous Lupus Erythematosus Disease Area and Severity Index (CLASI-50) and change in active joint count.

Source: pharmabiz.com

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DRUGS: DEVELOPMENT & CLINICAL TRIALS

4. Basilea announces positive results of phase 3 ERADICATE study with ceftobiprole in Staphylococcus aureus bacteremia (SAB)

Basilea Pharmaceutica Ltd (SIX: BSLN), a commercial-stage biopharmaceutical company, announced today positive topline results for the phase 3 ERADICATE study, evaluating ceftobiprole in the treatment of adult patients with bacterial bloodstream infections caused by Staphylococcus aureus (SAB).

Ceftobiprole met primary and secondary efficacy endpoints.

Basilea plans to submit a New Drug Application (NDA) in the U.S. around year end 2022.

The ERADICATE study enrolled 390 patients with complicated SAB, including right-sided endocarditis. Ceftobiprole met the pre-specified efficacy objective of overall success in the modified intent-to-treat (mITT) population at 70 days after randomization, assessed by an independent Data Review Committee, within the pre-specified non-inferiority margin of 15% compared to daptomycin, with or without aztreonam.

The overall success rate was 69.8% with ceftobiprole compared to 68.7% with daptomycin, with or without aztreonam. The statistically adjusted difference between ceftobiprole and the comparator group was 2.0% (95% confidence interval: -7.1% to 11.1%). Initial subgroup analyses showed no significant differences between the two treatment groups.

Ceftobiprole was well tolerated and the observed safety profile was consistent with previous phase 3 studies and the post-marketing experience with ceftobiprole. In the ERADICATE study the overall rate of adverse events was similar between the two treatment groups. As expected, gastrointestinal side effects were more frequent with ceftobiprole.

Source: globewirenews.com

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PATENTS: NEW APPROVALS /LITIGATIONS /SETTLEMENTS

1. New EC approval for Merck's Keytruda

Merck & Co (NYSE: MRK) today announced that the European Commission (EC) has approved Keytruda (pembrolizumab) Merck's mega-blockbuster anti-PD-1 therapy, as monotherapy for the adjuvant treatment of adults and adolescents aged 12 years and older with stage IIB or IIC melanoma and who have undergone complete resection.

Additionally, the EC approved expanding the indications for Keytruda in advanced (unresectable or metastatic) melanoma and stage III melanoma (as adjuvant treatment following complete resection) to include adolescent patients aged 12 years and older.

The approval of Keytruda for the adjuvant treatment of patients with resected stage IIB or IIC melanoma was based on results from the Phase III KEYNOTE-716 trial, in which Keytruda significantly prolonged recurrence-free survival (RFS), reducing the risk of disease recurrence or death by 39% (HR=0.61 [95% CI, 0.45-0.82]; p=0.00046) compared to placebo in this patient population at a median follow-up of 20.5 months.

Source: pharmaletter.com

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PATENTS: NEW APPROVALS /LITIGATIONS /SETTLEMENTS

2. Press Release: FDA grants efanesoctocog alfa Breakthrough Therapy designation for hemophilia A

Efanesoctocog alfa is the first factor VIII therapy to be awarded Breakthrough Therapy designation by the FDA.

Efanesoctocog alfa is a novel and investigational factor VIII therapy designed to provide normal to near-normal factor activity levels for the majority of the week in a once-weekly prophylactic treatment regimen.

Designation is based on XTEND-1 Phase 3 study data demonstrating a clinically meaningful prevention of bleeds and superiority in prevention of bleeding episodes compared to prior prophylaxis facor treatmenBreakthrough Therapy designation is designed to expedite the development and review of drugs in the US that target serious or life-threatening conditions002E

Source: sanofi.com

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PATENTS: NEW APPROVALS /LITIGATIONS /SETTLEMENTS

3. Oklahoma Settles With Three Opioid Distributors at Over $250 Million

Opioid distributors McKesson, Cardinal and AmerisourceBergen have agreed to pay a $250 million settlement to the state of Oklahoma over their alleged roles in the opioid epidemic.

Oklahoma had previously rejected a national settlement that included the three distributors. The state's attorney general John O'Connor said the national deal "would have short-changed Oklahomans."

The settlement agreement requires the companies to establish a clearinghouse that consolidates data from all three distributors that can be used by state regulators to prevent diversion of prescription opioids.

The state plans to use the settlement to help fund addiction prevention and treatment programs.

Source: fdanews.com

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PATENTS: NEW APPROVALS /LITIGATIONS /SETTLEMENTS

4. WTO waives intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines

The World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference has come to a decision on the proposed Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver for COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. In a controversial move, the Conference has adopted a partial TRIPS waiver, but only for vaccines.

Under the waiver, governments may authorise the use of the subject matter of a patent by a domestic manufacturer without the holder's consent using measures such as executive orders, emergency decrees, government use authorisations and judicial or administrative orders.

The current deal allows governments to share subject matter required for the production and supply of COVID-19 vaccines for the next five years, but only "to the extent necessary to address the COVID-19 pandemic".

Source: europeanpharmaceuticalreview.com

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TECHNOLOGY /NDDS

1. University of Strathclyde develops 3D breast cancer screening tool

A new screening tool developed at the University of Strathclyde that could increase the number of tests on a solid tumour sample by up to 50 times. The study also involved researchers at the University of Glasgow and the Cancer Research UK Beatson Institute in Glasgow.

The study has developed a miniaturised platform for screening 3D tumour models to evaluate the toxicity of CAR-T therapy towards cells. The platform enables visualisation and quantification of how CAR-T cells, when rapidly targeted, brake up and kill cancer cells without causing significant harm to other cells.

Source: pharmatimes.com

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TECHNOLOGY /NDDS

2. Apollo Centre launches Revolutionary blood test for early detection of breast cancer

Apollo Cancer Centres in collaboration with Datar Cancer Genetics, a cancer research company announced the launch of a blood test that promises to detect breast cancers at early stages in asymptomatic individuals with high accuracy, which could help timely diagnosis and treatment.

With an easy draw of a small quantity of blood, now, EasyCheck- Breast can help in the detection of breast cancer even before the first stage. The EasyCheck will be available across India on June 22 at all Apollo Cancer Centres.

Source: economictimes.indiatimes.com

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TECHNOLOGY /NDDS

3. IIT Roorkee develops device to detect schizophrenia, Parkinson's at early stage

A team of scientists at IIT-Roorkee has developed a sensor that they claim can effectively detect neurological diseases like schizophrenia and Parkinson's at an early stage. While the diseases cannot be cured, their advancement can be controlled if detected early. So according to scientists, when a person develops a neurological condition, the level of dopamine in their brain drops. The sensor in the device contains graphene quantum dots, which are mixed with sulfur and boron. It changes light intensity at the slightest presence of dopamine and can be used to detect the amount of the chemical in the brain, thus detecting the presence of the diseases.

First, fluid from the spine of the patient will be extracted and drops of it will be placed on a paper coated with the chemicals. The paper will then be inserted into a small device, which will detect the amount of dopamine and show if it's high or low through an LED-display.

The device has not been patented and so far it has only been tried out at labs. Clinical trials on patients will start at AIIMS-Rishikesh and Christian Medical College, Vellore, authorities said. "The study opens up possibilities of designing a point-of-care device which will be suitable for detecting the amount of dopamine in real samples," added Satapathi.

Source: economictimes.indiatimes.com

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TECHNOLOGY /NDDS

4. N95 mask with nanoparticle coating developed using 3D printing technology

Researchers have developed a reusable, recyclable, washable, odourless, non-allergic and anti-microbial N95 mask by using 3D printing technology.

The four-layer mask whose outer layer is made up of silicon has a shelf life of more than five years depending upon the use.

A four-layer filtration mechanism has been used in the mask wherein the outer and first layer of the filter is coated with nanoparticles. The second layer is a high-efficiency particulate absorbing filter, the third layer is 100 micrometer filter and the fourth layer is a moisture absorbent filter.

The Ministry added that apart from preventing Covid-19 infection, the mask can also be used in different industries where workers are exposed to high volumes of dust and can be modified as per the requirement by changing the filter configuration.

A trademark and a patent have also been filed for the mask called 'Nano Breath', the Ministry said, adding that it can also help prevent severe lung diseases such as Silicosis.

Source: economictimes.indiatimes.com

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