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Patrys offers human antibodies for cancer cure

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Traditionally, researchers have utilized rodents to generate antibodies that attack human cancer tissues. In most cases, researchers alter the non-human antibodies by adding human components. However, the antibodies that are marketed have critical weaknesses.

To overcome these hurdles in the biopharma industry, Mr Dan Devine, who managed the international business development team for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and was responsible for the identification of licensing candidates for key and emerging markets, started Patrys in 2007. He also got the firm listed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX).

The company won the BioSpectrum Asia Pacific Bioscience Industry Emerging Company of the Year Award for 2011.

The real journey of Patrys began in 2002 when Mr Devine started Acceptys and later negotiated a merger between Acceptys and OncoMab GmbH.
Patrys is the first company to develop a technology to systematically capture, identify and produce commercial quantities of the most potent anti-cancer natural human antibodies.

Mr Devine, while reacting to the support Patrys received from investors, says, "In addition, Patrys has been able to obtain grants and R&D tax concessions from the governments in Australia and Germany to support our natural human antibody development programs. The company has managed to raise $37 million since listing on the ASX."

The company started with three people and now has 23 full-time staff working from three locations, including Germany, the US and Australia. Patrys established itself as a clinical-stage drug development company with the commencement of the PAT-SM6 trial in melanoma and is also advancing in PAT-SC1, which has shown promise in the trials of gastric cancer patients. Patrys has added three new products to its pipeline from its back-up library of natural human antibodies, which has enabled Patrys to pursue a long-term strategy of advancing multiple products as internal programs with the help of collaboration with larger companies such as CSL.
Patrys has also made progress with its manufacturing production system for its lead clinical products with yields that support commercialization. Since the process developed is proprietary to Patrys, it will act as an obstacle for competitors who are interested in developing similar products.

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Patrys' researchers published over 45 peer-reviewed articles, and as of October 2010, Patrys' patent portfolio includes around 19 patent families. The portfolio covers all the lead products and patents that have already been issued in all major markets including the US, Europe, Japan, Canada and Australia. Till date, the company has on an average filed three new patent families per year covering new products, targets and supporting technologies.

Commenting on the future plan for the company, Mr Dan Devine, says, "At present we are conducting a first-in-man clinical trial with our lead product PAT-SM6 in melanoma patients. This trial is expected to be finalized in June 2011 and if the doses administered are proven to be safe then we will have the data necessary to progress to a trial with more patients and higher dosing. This follow up trial will focus on melanoma."

On receiving the BioSpectrum Asia Pacific Emerging Company of the Year Award, Mr Devine says, "The Asia Pacific markets have a large number of very successful and impressive early-stage biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. To be chosen as emerging company of the year is a very pleasant surprise, and pleasing to our team of professionals who have worked very hard to get the company where it is today. The award is not only gratifying by recognizing where our company stands today, but provides our team further incentive to keep up the momentum and get our products further into clinical development."