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Novartis, Regenerex further immune tolerance R&D

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Singapore: Novartis entered into an exclusive global licensing and research collaboration agreement with Regenerex, a biopharmaceutical company based in Louisville, Kentucky, US, for use of the company's novel Facilitating Cell Therapy (FCRx) platform.

The hematopoietic stem cell-based FCRx platform has been investigated in kidney transplantation to induce stable immunological tolerance, resulting in graft survival without the need for lifelong immunosuppression.

FCRx will broaden the current Novartis cell therapy portfolio, which includes two novel cell therapy platforms initially being investigated in hematological malignancies, including HSC835 and CTL019.While the former is a novel cell therapy approach that enables an expanded single umbilical cord blood derived hematopoietic stem cell transplant in patients with limited treatment options the latter is a chimeric antigen receptor T cell therapy currently in Phase II development in acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) and chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL).

Dr Timothy Wright, global head, development, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, said that, "As the field of biomedicine sits on the cusp of a new transformation, we are excited to announce this agreement which supports the Novartis leadership position in cell therapy."

Dr Wright further added, "Thirty years ago, Novartis developed ciclosporin, which changed transplantation treatment paradigms and enabled countless lives to be saved. Now, this collaboration, along with our internal cell therapy assets, has the potential to transform medicine once again through innovation."