

Labcorp, Covance to coordinate cell, gene therapy development solutions

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Specialized expertise, coordinated capabilities and targeted investments designed to accelerate development and reduce the risk for Sponsors at the preclinical, clinical, post-approval cell and gene therapy development solutions

LabCorp®, a leading global life sciences company that is deeply integrated into guiding patient care, on 13 Jan 2020 introduced its focused and coordinated suite of cell and gene therapy development solutions from Covance, its drug development business. These solutions are designed to reduce time and risk for sponsors at each phase and across the full continuum of their therapy development needs in one of the industry's fastest-growing segments.

With more than 20 years of experience in delivering development solutions for advanced therapies, such as cell and gene therapy products, Covance provides a unique offering of specialized expertise and coordinated capabilities, combined with focused investments supporting the preclinical, clinical and post-approval phases of development. By offering a coordinated approach to scientific and program consultation, biomarker and companion diagnostic development, study management, regulatory and commercialization support capabilities, Covance are uniquely positioned to partner with sponsor organizations to address complexity, reduce cost and risk, and effectively accelerate timelines of their novel therapies.

"With approximately one-third of biopharma's pipeline focused on precision medicines, it becomes even more critical to find innovative ways to help our customers speed these transformational therapies to the patients who need them," said Paul Kirchgraber, M.D., Covance chief executive officer. "Covance has made ongoing investments in people, processes and technologies targeting cell and gene therapies. We are also growing our capabilities and capacity by forming strategic partnerships and making key acquisitions, such as our purchase in early 2019 of MI BioResearch, a contract research organization (CRO) specializing in nonclinical oncology testing, with a focus on immunotherapies and adoptive T-cell therapeutic approaches."

Cell and gene therapies, which fit into the general category of advanced therapy medicinal products, are more complex and specialized than traditional drugs. They can involve correcting or replacing genetic information and engineering the correct functionality of cells or genes for many conditions, including cancer and rare diseases with a genetic basis.

"Covance is uniquely positioned to provide scientific and technical expertise to support the rapid growth in the development of cell and gene therapies and the introduction of new regulatory pathways for these products," said Steve Anderson, Ph.D., Covance chief scientific officer. "Our knowledge and experience from discovery through post-approval are significant, as demonstrated by our support of recent approvals in both cell and gene-based therapies. In the past four years, Covance has conducted more than 300 preclinical studies and more than 40 clinical trials for cell and gene therapies globally."