BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Tessa Therapeutics announces new executive leadership

May 5, 2020 | News

Jeffrey H. Buchalter will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer, and GÃ?Â¶ran A. Ando will become Chairman of the Board

Singapore based Tessa Therapeutics (Tessa), a clinical-stage cell therapy company developing next-generation cancer treatments, on 5 May 2020 announced that Jeffrey H. Buchalter will assume the role of Chief Executive Officer, and Göran A. Ando will become Chairman of the Board, with immediate effect. Current Chairman of the Board Teo Ming Kian has stepped down with effect from 1 May 2020 and Co-Founder, Andrew Khoo will remain as a member of the Board.

“Since its inception in 2012, Tessa has accomplished significant success in its goal to develop next-generation cancer cell therapies,” said Mr Khoo. “As the Company now progresses into the next phase of development of our lead therapies, it is important to make a leadership transition with demonstrated experience in these areas. The appointments of Jeff and Göran – both of whom have a wealth of biopharmaceutical development expertise – put Tessa in a position of strength for our future growth. I am confident that under their leadership, Tessa will continue to deliver innovation and value to the global oncology community.”

“Tessa has come a long way to where it is today,” added Mr. Teo. “Thanks to the pioneering spirit and passion of its people, Tessa has built a strong foundation of technologies and manufacturing capabilities with a clear objective of treating cancer by harnessing the immune response. I have the privilege of collaborating with this wonderful group of people, working together to overcome obstacles and position Tessa for further growth. Building a company with this ambition is a journey. I have every confidence with the new leadership team to bring Tessa to greater heights and become one of the leading cell therapy companies in the world.”

Dr. Ando commented, “I am grateful to Andrew and Ming Kian who have built a strong foundation for Tessa and I recognize the tremendous achievements they have created for the Company. Together, they brought Tessa to the precipice of being a leading creator of pioneering cancer therapies, and Jeffrey and I look forward to continuing their work and bringing their vision to life.”

Mr. Buchalter said, “This is an exciting time for Tessa as the company moves to advance its clinical and research pipelines and complete construction of its own GMP manufacturing facility. I am excited and honored to be leading this company through its next stage of development.”

Mr. Buchalter joined Tessa as an independent Board director in March 2019. He has led a distinguished career in the biopharmaceutical industry, spanning over 30 years. He previously served in various chairmanships and as Chief Executive Officer of both private and publicly listed companies, including Archimedes Pharmaceuticals, Enzon Pharmaceuticals, and Ilex Oncology, Inc. Prior to that, he served as Group VP/Head of Worldwide Oncology Franchise at Pharmacia & Upjohn.

Underscoring his industry leadership, Mr. Buchalter received the American Cancer Society's Joseph F. Buckley Memorial Award for his commitment to cancer control. He also served as Chairman of the Board of Directors to the National Childhood Cancer Foundation in the United States.

Dr. Ando joined Tessa as an independent Board director in April 2018, bringing over 35 years of experience as one of the most experienced and respected leaders in the global pharmaceutical industry. Dr. Ando currently serves as the Chairman of the Board for Eyepoint Pharma and has been a Senior Adviser to leading specialist healthcare investment group, Essex Woodlands, since 2007. He is also the retired Chairman of the Board of Global Pharmaceutical Company, Novo Nordisk A/S.

Dr. Ando has previously served as the Chief Executive Officer of Cell Tech Group PLC, one of the most successful European biotech companies, until it was acquired by UCB Pharma for $3 billion in 2005. Prior to that, he was Executive Vice President and President of R&D of Pharmacia Inc.