BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Hummingbird Bioscience and MD Anderson collaborate to advance innovative immunotherapies

July 13, 2021 | News

Multi-year collaboration will investigate and evaluate Hummingbird's HMBD-002 VISTA antagonist antibody



Hummingbird Bioscience, a US and Singapore-based innovative clinical-stage biotech company, and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center announced the launch of a multi-year strategic research collaboration to investigate and evaluate HMBD-002, Hummingbird's VISTA antagonist antibody.

Under the agreement, MD Anderson and Hummingbird will collaborate on the design and execution of clinical and translational research studies to better understand how HMBD-002 modulates the anti-tumor immune response, both as a monotherapy and in combination with other checkpoint inhibitors. Working with MD Anderson's immunotherapy platform and its experts in comprehensive immune profiling, the teams will seek to identify biomarkers that may be used to predict clinical outcomes and adverse events.

Jerome Boyd-Kirkup, Ph.D., co-founder and CSO of Hummingbird Bioscience, "These studies will strengthen our understanding of VISTA and other emerging immuno-oncology targets and help us ensure that novel treatment strategy for challenging cancers get to patients as quickly as possible."

VISTA, an immune checkpoint protein, is an emerging immunotherapy target for cancer that suppresses the anti-tumor immune response. Studies indicate increased levels of VISTA are associated with the emergence of resistance to current cancer immunotherapies. HMBD-002 is designed to inhibit VISTA, removing the suppression of the immune system and allowing it to mount an anti-tumor response.

"Targeting VISTA is an exciting area of immunotherapy research with the potential to have an impact on a variety of cancer types," said Padmanee Sharma, M.D., Ph.D., professor of Genitourinary Medical Oncology and Immunology at MD Anderson. "This collaboration aligns our expertise in studying the anti-tumor immune response with Hummingbird's novel therapeutic pipeline."