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Swiss-based sensorion and hearing care leader Sonova collaborates for presbycusis R&D

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The collaboration aims to introduce genetic analysis to the routine diagnosis of age-related progressive hearing loss (presbycusis)

Sensorion, a pioneering clinical-stage biotech company specializing in the development of novel therapies to restore, treat, and prevent hearing-related disorders, collaborated with a hearing-care industry leader Sonova, through a multi-year strategic collaboration. Sonova and Sensorion will jointly fund the study with €7.0 million, split 70/30 between the two companies.

The partnership aims to introduce genetic analysis to the routine diagnosis of progressive hearing loss in adults, thereby opening the way for improved care through a combination of advanced therapeutic interventions and traditional hearing aids.

The deal brings to fruition a process started in December 2020, when Sonova acquired a 3.7% stake in Sensorion for €5 million, and the two companies signed a letter of intent to engage in exclusive negotiations to create new diagnostic and therapeutic solutions for hearing loss.

The key element of the collaboration between Sensorion and Sonova is a natural history study including genotyping thousands of patients suffering from early onset of severe presbycusis (age-related hearing loss) with the aim of confirming hundreds of patients for specific mutations.

Nawal Ouzren, CEO of Sensorion. “Inherited factors contribute to the incidence, severity, and rate of progression of hearing loss in the general adult population. We are driving future standards of hearing loss diagnosis and of therapy. Collaboration keeps Sensorion at the cutting edge of hearing loss development by adding to our growing understanding of the ways gene therapy can help fill unmet medical needs beyond childhood and congenital deafness.”

The joint project aims to explore synergies between two approaches of hearing health care, traditional hearing care, and emerging biopharmaceutical approaches. Screening of genetic predispositions leading to hearing loss can potentially assist in new diagnostic procedures.