

Roche, Inovio enter \$422 mn cancer, HBV vaccine deal

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Singapore: Roche and Inovio Pharmaceuticals entered into an exclusive worldwide license agreement to R&D and commercialize Inovio's highly-optimized, multi-antigen DNA immunotherapies targeting prostate cancer and hepatitis B. The licensed compounds are currently in preclinical development and have generated robust T-cell responses in animal models.

Roche acquired an exclusive license for Inovio's DNA-based vaccines INO-5150 (targeting prostate cancer) and INO-1800 (targeting hepatitis B) as well as the use of Inovio's Celectra electroporation technology for delivery of the vaccines.

Roche also obtained an option to license additional vaccine opportunities in connection with a collaborative research program in oncology. Roche and Inovio will collaborate to further develop INO-5150 and INO-1800.

Under the terms of the agreement, Roche will make an upfront payment of \$10 million to Inovio. Roche will also provide preclinical R&D support and payments for near-term regulatory milestones as well as payments upon reaching certain development and commercial milestones potentially up to \$412.5 million.

Commenting on the deal, Dr Hy Levitsky, head of cancer immunology experimental medicine at Roche, said that, "At Roche we are always interested in finding first-in-class and best-in-class therapies that may become the next generation treatments for patients with different types of cancer. INO-5150 will allow promising combination opportunities with the Roche portfolio, particularly with our emerging cancer immunotherapy molecules."