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ASIA EDITION

Singapore's iX Biopharma secures $41 M contract from US govt for development of non-opioid pain treatment

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Based on proprietary drug delivery technology, advanced clinical development status and manufacturing capabilities

Singapore-based iX Biopharma has been awarded a $40.95 million development contract by the United States Government to fund the development of Wafermine®, its patented sublingual ketamine wafer for the treatment of acute moderate to severe pain.

The programme funding, awarded by the US Department of Defense (DoD) through the Defense Health Agency Contracting Activity (DHACA), will support the Phase 3 clinical development of Wafermine® and fund activities required to obtain a US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) for Department of Defense use for a 36-month period of performance.

The award represents a significant international validation of Singapore-developed pharmaceutical innovation, underscoring the capability of local biotech companies to deliver advanced medical technologies addressing global healthcare and security needs.

Wafermine®, the world’s first patented sublingual racemic ketamine wafer, is designed to deliver rapid pain relief without injections. The wafer dissolves under the tongue, allowing ketamine to enter the bloodstream quickly without the need for intravenous access or specialised administration; these features are particularly relevant in emergency, battlefield and remote care settings.

The US Government programme is intended to support both near-term and long-term military medical needs. In the near term, the funded EUA pathway would allow the DoD to deploy Wafermine® prior to full FDA approval. In parallel, the programme will support Phase 3 clinical trials required for eventual submission of a full New Drug Application to the FDA.

Beyond its military use, Wafermine® is being developed to address underserved needs in civilian healthcare, namely for commercial use to meet the need for non-opioid pain drugs, besides battlefield deployment and operational military medical

use by the DoD.