

Roche, AstraZeneca form firm to share R&D data

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Singapore: Roche and AstraZeneca entered into a collaboration to share early research data generated by Matched Molecular Pair Analysis (MMPA). The drug design technology helps identify modifications in molecules. The technology is expected to accelerate the discovery of high quality compounds with an increased chance of clinical success.

This gives both companies the opportunity to efficiently reapply useful medicinal chemistry know-how embedded in their combined databases of experimental results, in order to identify potential new drug candidates using fewer rounds of design, synthesis and testing. Both Roche and AstraZeneca will make their selected databases available for this type of joint analysis and are committed to making the data generated available to the broader research community, including research foundations, charities and academia.

The two drug giants have formed an intermediary company called MedChemica to manage the data. The consortium is open to other large companies to add their knowledge thereby gaining access to and enhancing this resource. More data added to this system will raise the quality and specificity of drug design rules.

Dr Luca Santarelli, head, Neuroscience and Small Molecule Research, Roche, said that, "It is unique in the history of our industry that two major players are sharing their know-how at such an early stage of research. We believe that this transparency of small molecule optimization knowledge, in a smart and thoughtful way, could profoundly enhance our ability to design drugs, be of benefit for all parties involved and ultimately help bring better medicines to patients."

Mr Alexander Dossetter, MD, MedChemica, said that, "We congratulate both companies for taking the courageous first step of sharing medicinal chemistry knowledge. We aim to expand this kind of collaboration and eventually go beyond facilitating chemical building blocks into chemical lead hunting and optimization. The goal is that resources will be better utilized and patients better served."