BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Mesoblast to set up stem cell drug plant in Singapore

May 29, 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: Australian regenerative drug company, Mesoblast, is planning to expand its global manufacturing base and the company is in dialogues with Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) for setting up a commercial site in Singapore.

The company has reported to receive incentives from EDB for activities in Singapore related to manufacturing operations, as well as product development and commercialization.

Prof Silviu Itescu, Chief Executive, Mesoblast commented, "Bringing forward commercial manufacturing operations in Singapore is an important part of our overall global strategy as we prepare for product launches. Singapore offers Mesoblast important benefits for our commercial, manufacturing and research operations. In particular, Singapore's business friendly environment, focus on cellular therapies and strong scientific base, supported by the EDB and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), are all assets to Mesoblast."

Mesoblast's existing operations in Singapore include clinical manufacturing supply of its proprietary mesenchymal lineage products under contract manufacturing agreements with Lonza, a leader in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. These agreements include exclusive access by Mesoblast to Lonza's existing state of the art facilities in Singapore for allogeneic stem cell therapy, subject to certain exceptions. In addition, under these agreements, Mesoblast can trigger a process requiring Lonza to construct a purpose-built manufacturing facility exclusively for Mesoblast's use.

Prochymal, Mesoblasts's adavanced product, is an allogeneic stem cell therapeutic designated by the United States Food and Drug Administration as orphan drug and fast track product and is being first developed for the treatment of steroid-refractory Graft Versus Host Disease. Other major late-stage indications for Mesoblast's mesenchymal lineage products include congestive heart failure, degenerative disc disease, and Crohn's disease.

Mr Yeoh Keat Chuan, managing director, EDB, "We are pleased that Mesoblast, the leading company in stem cell therapies and regenerative medicine, has chosen to establish a major presence spanning commercial manufacturing and R&D activities in Singapore. Stem cell therapy holds great potential for many unmet medical needs. Mesoblast's decision is a strong endorsement of Singapore's track record and ability to support new business opportunities in the biopharmaceutical industry."