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Daiichi forms new firm to treat muscular dystrophy

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Singapore: Daiichi Sankyo is going to establish a new company named Orphan Disease Treatment Institute, along with Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ) and Mitsubishi UFJ Capital.

Daiichi Sankyo will collaborate with the new company to undertake development of a treatment for Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) with the active ingredient ENA oligonucleotide, a modified nucleic acid that is made using Daiichi's proprietary technology.

INCJ will underwrite third party allocation of new shares for the new company with a maximum investment of 1.65 billion yen. The new company will also issue new shares by third party allocation for a fund managed by MUC. Daiichi Sankyo will invest in the new company and mainly conduct development with the goal of achieving proof of concept (POC) for clinical drug development.

DMD is a disease that affects one-in-3,500 new-born males regardless of ethnicity. The onset of the disease occurs between the age of two and five. At first, the diesease slightly affects the ability to be self-reliant. DMD is associated with muscular atrophy which progresses with age, causing various impairments to mobility and finally resulting in death for many individuals

in their 20s and 30s.

It is an extremely serious and rare hereditary X-linked recessive genetic disorder. It is known that DMD occurs because muscle cells do not produce dystrophin, but there is no fundamental or effective therapy available for it yet.