



Oncodesign® to Develop Experimental Cancer Models for sanofi-aventis

Under the terms of a two-year service contract, Oncodesign is to develop exclusive cancer models for sanofi-aventis after the pharmaceutical group was impressed by Oncodesign's work for the CReMEC program sponsored by Medicen Paris Region

Dijon (France), October 28, 2009 – Oncodesign, a specialist in the identification of novel cancer therapies, has signed a two-year service contract with sanofi-aventis under which it is to supply and develop exclusive, experimental models in different types of cancer for the Paris-based pharmaceutical company.

Unlike traditional models, which are derived from cultured cell lines, the models that Oncodesign is developing are based on the use of tumor tissue taken directly from patients, enabling more customized evaluations to be made of new therapies while remaining as close as possible to clinical reality. The financial terms of the contract were not disclosed.

"To our knowledge, this contract is a first for a service company, since it is a long-term collaboration that calls for us to supply experimental models to sanofi-aventis," said the CEO of Oncodesign, Philippe Genne. "We are working to develop our design and validation capability so we can make ready-to-use models available to our customers and partners."

And he added: "This collaboration is a positive result of our participation in the CReMEC [Resource Center for Experimental Cancer Models] program, in which we confirmed the relevance of our approach in tumor models with few successive grafts."

Oncodesign and sanofi-aventis worked together on the CReMEC program, which started in 2005 under the sponsorship of the Medicen Paris Region competition pole and entailed the development and characterization of experimental models of colon cancer. The work involved evaluating new therapies in the most relevant models, the ones that most resemble the clinical reality in histological, molecular and pharmacological terms. The participants in this program may also have access to models of tumors taken from patients who have already undergone treatments and/or have developed resistance to them. It is then possible to look for new treatments or combinations of medicines.

"We trust Oncodesign's know-how and its long-term project management ability," said the Head of Oncology Research at sanofi-aventis, Christoph Lengauer. "The company's specific logistics, which enables usable models to be developed with only a few grafts, was a decisive factor in our choice."



Cancer puts great pressure on healthcare systems, since the disease costs hundreds of billions of dollars a year in western countries. Nevertheless, existing cancer treatments are not very effective, having an average response rate of only about 20%. The shift in treatment strategy towards more targeted therapies creates a need for more predictive experimental models to meet the new demands of the pharmaceutical industry.

About Oncodesign Biotechnology SA

Oncodesign Biotechnology's prime goal since its conception has been the identification of novel anticancer therapies. The company has developed an innovative preclinical research platform dedicated to establishing the *in vitro* and *in vivo* proof of concept of potential therapeutic agents. Its pharmacology based "Qualifying Approach", aimed at the rapid evaluation of the therapeutic potential of novel molecules, and the translational perspective of Oncodesign create a continuum from drug target to patient.

In addition to its service offering, Oncodesign has significantly invested in its own technological R&D programs to increase its innovation base. Currently, Oncodesign has taken the lead in two important national initiatives, CReMEC (Medicen, Paris), which aims at the creation of a French resource centre for experimental oncology models based on primary tumor material, and PharmImage, a centre of excellence in pharmaco-imaging (Dijon, France). Starting from these research platforms, Oncodesign has continued to develop its business scope over the past year and is now offering capabilities and experience for the discovery of novel therapeutic and diagnostic agents through an integrated stand-alone approach.

Founded in 1995, by Dr Philippe Genne, Oncodesign Biotechnology is based in Dijon, France. It employs 60 people including 12 PhDs and has a worldwide client-base of over 400 large and small companies.

For more information on Oncodesign Biotechnology's R&D platform and its services: www.oncodesign.com.

Contact for Media & Analysts:

Andrew Lloyd & Associates

Neil Hunter/Andrew Lloyd

neil@ala.com/allo@ala.com

Tel: +44 1273 675 100
