

Orion signs cooperation agreement with HUCH Comprehensive Cancer Center

Orion Corporation and the HUCH Comprehensive Cancer Center have entered into an extensive cooperation agreement. The agreement will bring all the clinical cancer drug studies launched by Orion to HUCH and also enable more comprehensive research cooperation in the development of drug candidates.

"The new agreement will ensure the early admission of patients to cancer drug research. It will help us develop the treatment of cancer patients even further," says Director Petri Bono from the HUCH Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"Investments in oncology as a therapy area have grown significantly at Orion. As the clinical studies started with two new molecules prove, we need experienced partners in oncology. In our collaboration with the HUCH Comprehensive Cancer Center, I believe we will have the best of all worlds," says Dr. Reijo Salonen, SVP R&D and Chief Medical Officer for Orion. "In Helsinki and in Finland, both basic and clinical research in cancer is world-class while at Orion, we have a track record of inventing innovative molecules. I believe that this collaboration will improve our chances of investigating, discovering and developing new treatments in cancer here in Finland for the patients who desperately need them."

"Orion has recently made substantial advances in drug development. A great example of this is ODM-201, a prostate cancer drug that Orion is now developing further in cooperation with Bayer. This new opportunity to develop cancer drugs all the way from molecule building to clinical use, while making the most of the expertise of various specialists, is exactly what Finland needs right now," says Professor Heikki Joensuu, Research Director of the Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The new partnership will also enhance Orion's view of the patient perspective already in the R&D phase. It is particularly important in cancer drug development to take into account comprehensive patient care and not only remedy the disease but also the patients' quality of life.

About ODM-201

ODM-201 is an investigational novel AR inhibitor with unique chemistry that is designed to block the growth of CRPC. ODM-201 binds to AR with high affinity and inhibits receptor function by blocking the nuclear translocation of AR. Unlike other AR inhibitors, ODM-201 does not enter the brain in nonclinical models.

Comprehensive Cancer Center in brief

The Helsinki University Central Hospital (HUCH) Comprehensive Cancer Center is the largest and most versatile cancer treatment centre in Finland providing personalised cancer treatment. The center is part of the Helsinki University Central Hospital and is responsible for the oncological treatment of all adult cancer patients within the Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa.

Clinical trials conducted in the Center span from small Phase I studies to large Phase III and IV trials, and range from surgical oncology, radiation therapy, medical oncology and haematology to palliative care and research on psychosocial aspects of cancer. Each year, the HUCH Cancer Center treats some 21,000 patients, of whom approximately 8,000 are new patients.

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Orion is a globally operating Finnish company developing pharmaceuticals and diagnostic tests - a builder of well-being. Orion develops, manufactures and markets human and veterinary pharmaceuticals, active pharmaceutical ingredients and diagnostic tests. The company is continuously developing new drugs and treatment methods. The core therapy areas of Orion's pharmaceutical R&D are central nervous system (CNS) disorders, oncology and respiratory for which Orion develops inhaled Easyhaler® pulmonary drugs.

Orion's net sales in 2014 amounted to EUR 1,015 million and the company had about 3,500 employees. Orion's A and B shares are listed on NASDAQ Helsinki.