



## **Glycostem and Ghent University sign license agreement on NK cell therapy technology**

**New opportunities for the development of NK-antibody combination therapies  
Significant positive effect on production time of Glycostem's lead product oNKord®, and future CAR-NK and TCR-NK therapies.**

Oss, the Netherlands - 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 - Glycostem Therapeutics B.V., a leading clinical-stage company focused on the development of therapeutic off-the-shelf Natural Killer (NK) cells, and Ghent University (UGent) have signed a license agreement for an innovative NK cell production technology. Ultimately, this agreement will bring significant benefit to targeted treatment of patients suffering from cancer. The agreement not only opens up new opportunities for development of NK-antibody combination therapies but also has significant positive impact on the production time of Glycostem's lead product oNKord® and its second (CAR-NK) and third (TCR-NK) generation therapies – viveNK™.

"This license agreement offers new opportunities for more targeted treatment of cancer patients. By using UGent's technology we are able to increase the expression of CD16 receptors resulting in an increase of the NK-cell's activity and its antibody binding properties. When a patient's immunity is weak, administering NK-cells will boost the patient's immune system and increase the antibody's therapeutic effectiveness," explains Troels Jordansen, CEO at Glycostem.

Glycostem's NK-cell based therapies are manufactured in its in-house GMP licensed facility. "Ghent University's technology has the potential to almost halve the time needed for NK cell progenitor cells to differentiate into fully functional NK-cells. By incorporating this in our processes both our manufacturing time and cost-effectiveness will be affected very positively without negative effect on the potency of the NK cells. This is an important part of paving the way for further upscaling the production of our NK-cells," says Troels Jordansen.

"We are glad to see our research translated to a clinical setting as it is based on many years of fundamental research into NK cell biology." Tells Prof. Georges Leclercq, head of the UGent research team and group leader in the Cancer Research Institute Ghent (CRIG). "We hope that with this collaboration, we can positively impact the lives of many patient's affected by difficult to treat cancers".

Dr. Dominic De Groote (UGent Business Development) further explains: "This partnership is the result of continuing efforts by Ghent University and Ghent University Hospital to become a leading academic and clinical center for cell-based therapies. This technology is part of our growing portfolio of oncology and Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP) related assets that we are actively developing from the bench to the bedside through our translational platforms."

### **Taking cellular immunotherapy to the next level**

Glycostem is focused on developing first, second and third generation cancer treatments based on NK-

cells. This licensing deal will affect Glycostem's full portfolio. After a successful phase I study Glycostem initiated a first-of-its-kind pivotal trial in acute myeloid leukemia (AML) with in-house manufactured nonmodified NK cells (oNKord®). Over the coming months, AML patients will receive this form of treatment as part of a phase I-IIa trial. A pivotal phase IIa trial for Multiple Myeloma (MM) patients is expected to start second half of 2021. This makes Glycostem one of the frontrunners in this promising field of cellular immunotherapy.

## **About Glycostem**

Netherlands-based Glycostem Therapeutics BV, a clinical stage biotech company, develops allogeneic cellular immunotherapy to treat several types of cancer. By harnessing the power of stem cell-derived Natural Killer (NK) cells, Glycostem's products are a safe alternative to CAR-T-cells. Glycostem's lead product, oNKord®, is manufactured from allogeneic raw material and is available off-the shelf. Thanks to its nine patent families, longstanding technical expertise and resources, as well as 'Orphan Drug Designation', Glycostem has secured a leadership position in the global NK-cell market.

oNKord® is produced in a closed system (uNiK™) in Glycostem's state-of-the-art and GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) licensed production facility in the Netherlands, from which it can be distributed globally. The production technology includes *ex vivo* generation of high numbers of NK-cells with a high degree of purity for clinical applications. oNKord® successfully passed phase I clinical trial (elderly and frail AML - Acute Myeloid Leukemia - patients), providing solid safety data and strong indication of clinical activity, including response on MRD (Minimal Residual Disease). Results indicate that oNKord® may be safely infused in AML patients.

Glycostem is furthermore developing a range of CAR-NK and TCR-NK products in-house and in cooperation with global partners.

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*Foot note: "oNKord" is a registered trademark of Glycostem in the US and in Europe. Trademark registrations of "viveNK" and "uNiK" are pending.*

## **About Ghent University**

Ghent University (UGent) is a major Belgian university located in the heart of Europe. Our organization is dedicated to research and innovation with over 5,500 researchers active in a wide area of life, physical and social sciences. Strong partnerships with the Ghent University Hospital (1000+ beds), VIB, IMEC and global leaders in academia and pharma/biotech industry thrive life science innovation at our university and is part of the thriving Belgian biotech region. Our translational platforms such as CRIG (focus on cancer) and GATE (focus on advanced therapy medicinal products) facilitate to bring science to the patient.

Prof. Georges Leclercq has a longstanding and internationally recognized expertise in differentiation and function of NK cells. The recent focus of his research group is to reveal the role of several transcription factors in the differentiation of human hematopoietic stem cells into mature NK cells, and in the maintenance and function of these mature NK cells. The ultimate aim is to attribute to improved NK-based cancer immunotherapy.

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