

Valo Therapeutics develops a novel virus-based cancer immunotherapy

January 31 2017

A spin-out from the University of Helsinki, Valo Therapeutics is developing novel oncolytic viral vaccines for the treatment of multiple forms of cancer. The therapeutic platform is projected to target cancer by recruiting the body's own defense mechanisms to clear the cancer and subsequently to give patients a lasting resistance to recurring disease (vaccination).

Valo Therapeutics recently closed its seed funding round, establishing strategic partnerships with world class investors in this rapidly growing scientific space.

The funding will take the company through pre-clinical development of a proprietary and genetically modified adenovirus coupled with tumor-specific peptides, that can both directly target cancer cells as well as elicit a strong and lasting specific anti-tumor immune response. A highly experienced team with deep experience of oncolytic viruses and [clinical trials](#) is driving development.

Current oncolytic viral therapies mostly focus on direct tumor cell lysis and typically generate a strong anti-viral immune response plus a weaker anti-tumor effect. Valo Therapeutics has disguised its viral particles using tumor-specific antigens (peptides), which can provide the information necessary to direct the [immune response](#) toward the patient's tumor. This patented technology was developed by Scientific Founder Professor Vincenzo Cerullo, Head of the Drug Research Program at the University of Helsinki in the Faculty of Pharmacy, and a leader in his

field: "Our approach seeks to revolutionise the way oncolytic virotherapies will be used in the future" said Prof. Cerullo, adding, "this technology is applicable to nearly all viruses being used at the moment".

Dr. Michael Stein is the incoming Chairman of Valo Tx (currently Chairman and CEO of OxStem, the award winning spin-out from the University of Oxford). Dr Stein observed: "I was struck by the quality of the company's very promising pre-clinical data. In addition, the team is equipped with all the expertise necessary to accelerate this treatment to market, providing patients with a potentially transformational therapy". Dr. Stein continued, "Valo Tx is fortunate to have the strategic backing of some highly experienced investors including the University of Helsinki, as well as the resources of the University of Helsinki Innovation Services" (HIS).

HIS supported the company in preparing the initial spin-out and will continue to provide support for full commercialisation of the technology. Jari Strandman, CEO of Helsinki Innovation Services: "We are incredibly excited about the potential of this new technology and delighted to see the rapid progress already being made".

Freeman Road is a family consortium with deep experience in the healthcare technology space, and a primary Investor in Valo Therapeutics. Director and Physician Dr. Paul Porter said: "We invested into Valo Tx because the business concept is novel, with potential for enormous impact; and it is backed by a highly experienced team".

Valo Therapeutics will fund the progression of its new therapy through clinical trials in humans in 2018 - each with a focus on a different cancer indication with large unmet therapeutic need. The team will focus initially on two cancer indications as a proof of concept, with a view to expanding to other [cancer](#) types over time.

More information: www.valotx.com/

Provided by University of Helsinki

Citation: Valo Therapeutics develops a novel virus-based cancer immunotherapy (2017, January 31) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-01-valo-therapeutics-virus-based-cancer-immunotherapy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.