

Tuesday, January 10, 2006

## **BioPharmica touts new cancer target**

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Newly listed Perth meditech BioPharmica (ASX:BPH) has taken the wraps off a new tumour-suppressor gene candidate that shows high promise as a therapeutic and diagnostic target for many cancers, as well as in AIDS and the brain disorder Huntington's disease.

Discovered by Prof Peter Klinken's cancer-research team at the Western Australian Institute of Medical Research, *HLS5* shows certain properties characteristic of tumour-suppressor genes, but BioPharmica MD Dr Sam Gallagher says it has a novel mode of action that increases its potential as a therapeutic target for multiple disorders.

BioPharmica has filed provisional patents in Australia, the US and Europe covering its use as a therapeutic and diagnostic target. Klinken's team identified the gene during research into leukaemia, and has since shown that it is involved in a number of key regulatory processes in human cells, and in immune-system regulation.

In these roles, *HLS5* influences individual susceptibility to diseases like AIDS and Huntington's, and the rate at which these diseases progress. Gallagher said the emerging picture of the gene's role "could hardly have worked out better" for the company, which is specialising in personalised medicine. Gallagher said the company has become increasingly excited by *HLS5*'s potential as new findings have emerged from the WAIMR's research.

Gallagher said BioPharmica has not been able to publish any research details during the provisional patenting process, but when the patents are issued, Klinken's group will publish a number of papers describing its mechanism, and its potential as a therapeutic target for a range of cancers, Huntington's and AIDS. She said WAIMR researchers have found *HLS5* reduces the formation of tumours in laboratory mice. A recent pilot study has shown that the gene is aberrant or deleted in the majority of tissue samples from patients with cancer -- consistent with it being a tumour suppressor.

Gallagher said international researchers were taking an increasing interest in Klinken's identification of the various cellular links and pathways involving *HLS5*, and once the patents were secure, BioPharmica would broaden its collaborations with Australian and international research groups.

Rather than restricting licensing and collaborations to the field of cancer, BioPharmica would actively seek potential opportunities in neurodegenerative and infectious diseases.

## **BioPharmica appoints Sam Gallagher as new boss** Wednesday, November 30, 2005

**BIOTECHNOLOGY commercialisation company BioPharmica Limited has appointed Dr Sam Gallagher as its new managing director.**

BioPharmica said that as a former senior R&D scientist for Amersham Biosciences and GE Healthcare, Gallagher brought significant product development and international partnering

experience relating to large pharmaceutical and biotech companies to the BioPharmica board.

Gallagher was involved in the development and launch of multi-million-dollar biomedical products produced by Amersham Biosciences and GE Healthcare from conception to application, validation and sale.