China's colorectal cancer drug market expected to grow to more than $400 million in 2016

Decision Resources, one of the world's leading research and advisory firms for pharmaceutical and healthcare issues, finds that the colorectal cancer drug market in China will grow from $261 million in 2011 to $404 million in 2016. According to Colorectal Cancer in China, the increased use of targeted therapies will be a key factor driving growth in this market.

Report findings reveal that although two targeted therapies—Merck KGaA's Erbitux and Roche's Avastin—have both been approved by the State Food and Drug Administration in China, the high cost of treatment with these agents has limited their use to colorectal cancer patients in the second- or third-line of therapy. However, Decision Resources expects between 2011 and 2016, Chinese oncologists will use Erbitux and Avastin earlier in the treatment algorithm and more frequently.

"The use of Erbitux and Avastin in first-line treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer patients is common in the major markets, and we anticipate that practice will impact prescribing patterns in China," said Decision Resources Analyst Jing Wu, M.S., M.B.A. "Because of the premium price of these agents, even a slight increase in patient share will drive increased sales and market growth."

The analysis reveals that expanded reimbursement of drugs treating colorectal cancer, increased patient spending power and an increase in the number of diagnosed and drug-treated patient populations will also contribute to market growth.

"The number of diagnosed incident cases of colorectal cancer in China will increase five percent annually over our ten-year forecast," said Ms. Wu. "The increase is due mainly to an aging population and an increase in the age-adjusted risk of colorectal cancer due to increased exposure to various risk factors attributable to colorectal cancer."

The new report features extensive primary research with Chinese oncologists as well as a market outlook by drug and class through 2016 and colorectal cancer epidemiology through 2021.

Medistem appoints director of Chinese operations

Medistem Inc. (PINKSHEETS: MEDS) announced recently the appointment of Feng Lin, MD, Ph.D as Director of Chinese Operations. Dr. Lin has an extensive background in basic research and therapeutics development, having previously worked at the Hunan Medical University in both preclinical and clinical settings. Dr. Lin will be working out of Medistem's San Diego office.

"Medistem has been collaborating with the Hunan Medical University since 2007, including publishing the first clinical use of the ERC in 2009 (link to publication: http://www.translational-medicine.com/content/pdf/1479-5876-7-15.pdf)," stated Thomas Ichim, CEO of Medistem Inc. "Dr. Lin will coordinate our academic and business collaborations, including existing relationships with the Tongji Hospital of Wuhan, the Second Xiangya Hospital, of the Central South University, in Hunan, and our partnership with the Shanghai Jia Fu Medical Apparatus Inc. It is with great pleasure that we welcome Dr. Lin to the team."

Medistem is currently collaborating with the Shanghai Jia Fu Medical Apparatus Inc, a conglomerate that has commercialized cell therapies in China, for developing its "Universal Donor" stem cell product, the Endometrial Regenerative Cell (ERC), as a treatment for critical limb ischemia. The Shanghai Jia Fu Medical Apparatus company is currently utilizing patient's own bone marrow stem cells in the treatment of critical limb ischemia. The collaboration will assess whether superior results are obtained with the ERC. If results are successful, Medistem anticipates data collection and revenue generation within the next 18 months.

"To my knowledge Medistem is the only company to have taken a product from discovery in 2007 to an FDA cleared clinical trial within the short span of 4 years. It is my honor to work with such an aggressive team at opening up the Chinese Market," said Dr. Feng Lin. "A strong association between smoking and critical limb ischemia exists; at present China has more smokers than the population of the USA. We are excited about the possibility of a universal donor stem cell therapy for treatment of this condition that causes amputation in approximately 30% of patients within a year."

The ERC are a unique population of stem cells that originate from the endometrium and are derived from menstrual blood. One donor can generate 20,000 doses. To date ERCs have demonstrated the ability to produce more growth factors, and ability to generate new blood vessels, as compared to other stem cell types.