VolitionRx expands its lung cancer detection clinical trial program using its novel Nu.Q blood test

VolitionRx Limited (NYSEAmerican:VNRX) said Wednesday that the cancer-focused life sciences company is executing a pact, through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Belgian Volition SPRL, to conduct its first large-scale lung cancer study with the National Taiwan University.

To that end, Belgian Volition SPRL inked a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding with the prestigious national university in Taipei City, Taiwan.

The Isnes, Belgium-based company has designed routine Nu.Q blood-based diagnostic tests to screen for colorectal and prostate cancers that reduce the need for more invasive colonoscopies and biopsies. It could also work as a screening tool for endometriosis and has potential veterinary uses as well.

READ: VolitionRx strengthens balance sheet in 2018 as Nu.Q blood test notches further advances in cancer-detection trials

VolitionRx Limited’s unique Nu.Q technology looks for very early ‘nucleosomic’ markers of cancer. In other words, the Nu.Q technology uses an array of simple, cost-effective blood tests to identify early-stage cells before it spreads.

A comprehensive study will now be conducted by Professor Chen Jin-Shing in the department of surgery, at the National Taiwan University, where 1,200 subjects, including 1,000 with lung cancer, will undergo low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) scanning, which uses less radiation than a conventional CT scan.

"The early data of the Nu.Q technology platform is promising, but clearly larger scale studies are required," said Professor Chen Jin-Shing who will be collaborating with Volition in evaluating its Nu.Q technology platform. "Lung cancer remains the deadliest of all the cancers and there is a high unmet clinical need for either a non-invasive early stage lung cancer detection test or for a triage test which can improve the specificity of the low-dose CT scan currently used."

"At a total cost of approximately $320,000 payable over two years, this study demonstrates once more Volition's commitment to conducting large yet cost effective trials worldwide," said Dr Jasmine Kway, CEO of Singapore Volition. "We are hopeful that our recent proof of concept results in lung cancer will be repeated in this much larger cohort. We expect to release preliminary data relating to the first 600 patient samples to be reported in first quarter of 2020."

Positive preliminary results

Volition recently shared preliminary results from two proof-of-concept studies. In a recent lung cancer cohort, involving 76 subjects, a single Nu.Q assay test detected lung cancer, including stage 1 lung cancer.

A second lung cancer study, evaluating 152 subjects, also detected lung cancer and a third study using a single Nu.Q
assay to determine the presence of colorectal cancer in 123 subjects also picked up the presence of colorectal cancer with an Area Under the Curve (AUC) of 72%.

VolitionRx is also seeing encouraging preliminary results from the use of its Nu.Q. platform in veterinary medicine after discovering that nucleosomes in the blood can also be detected in dogs. The company is working with Texas A&M University’s College of Veterinary Medicine to conduct a study of Nu.Q Vet, a key target market for early revenue given the simpler regulatory pathway for veterinary products.

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