Allogene Therapeutics and Foresight Diagnostics Announce Partnership to Develop MRD-based In-Vitro Diagnostic for Use in ALPHA3, the First Pivotal Trial for Frontline Consolidation in Large B-Cell Lymphoma

Jan 4, 2024 at 4:15 PM EST

- Partnership Will Utilize Foresight's Ultra-Sensitive MRD Technology to Identify Patients for Enrollment in Allogene's ALPHA3 Trial

SAN FRANCISCO and BOULDER, Colo., Jan. 04, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Allogene Therapeutics Inc. (Nasdaq: ALLO), a clinical-stage biotechnology company pioneering the development of allogeneic CAR T (AlloCAR T™) products, and Foresight Diagnostics (Foresight), the leader in the development of ultra-sensitive liquid biopsy circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA) detection today announced a strategic partnership to develop a minimal residual disease (MRD) in-vitro diagnostic (IVD) to determine eligibility in ALPHA3, the first pivotal trial for first line (1L) consolidation treatment of large B-cell lymphoma (LBCL).

The ALPHA3 trial uses Foresight's investigational PhasED-Seq™ ctDNA-MRD platform to identify patients with MRD after 1L treatment for LBCL. The study will evaluate whether such patients benefit from consolidation with cemacabtagene ansegedleucel, or cema-cel (previously known as ALLO-501A). If successful, cema-cel could become part of the 1L treatment plan for newly diagnosed LBCL patients who are at a high risk for recurrence. Start-up activities for the ALPHA3 trial have been initiated.

"We knew that an ultra-sensitive ctDNA-based biomarker would be crucial to accurately identify patients with minimal residual disease whose cancer will likely recur. Foresight was the partner we were waiting for due to PhasED-Seq's robust evidence and reputation as the most reliable and sensitive MRD assay in development for LBCL," said David Chang, M.D., Ph.D., President, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Allogene. "The combination of rapid, blood-based testing and an off-the-shelf allogeneic CAR T creates a unique opportunity to deliver consolidation therapy before cancer relapses. This will also allow us to aim for broader patient access to this powerful modality by making enrollment available in community centers where the infrastructure to administer autologous therapies may not be readily available."

Although 1L R-CHOP is curative for many with LBCL, approximately 30% of patients who initially respond will later relapse[i]. The standard of care after 1L treatment has been simply to "watch and wait" for the disease to relapse. The reliance on radiographic imaging, the current clinical standard for relapse detection, does not allow effective consolidation approaches due to its limited accuracy[ii]. PhasED-Seq is an ultra-sensitive and specific, plasma-based liquid biopsy that will enable cema-cel's 1L consolidation approach in ALPHA3 through early and accurate MRD assessment beyond current radiographic imaging-based disease assessment[iii].

Growing evidence also suggests improved outcomes and safety for patients who are treated with CAR T when tumor burden is low[iv]. Cema-cel's Phase 1 safety profile, with low rates of cytokine release syndrome (CRS) and immune effector cell-associated neurotoxicity syndrome (ICANS), already permits its use in the outpatient setting in relapsed/refractory patients and may further improve in patients with no radiological evidence of disease.

"Although CAR T therapy has shown promise in multiple cancer indications, it has been relegated to later lines of treatment. The combination of cema-cel's speed to treatment, its favorable efficacy and safety profile from the Phase 1 trial in later lines, and the ability to pair it with an accurate biomarker has provided the pathway to introduce CAR T into the first line LBCL treatment setting. Importantly, it may allow cema-cel to consolidate response in patients at high risk of relapse and in the community setting where most first line patients are managed," said Zachary Roberts, M.D., Ph.D., Executive Vice President of Research & Development and Chief Medical Officer of Allogene. "The partnership between Allogene and Foresight Diagnostics brings all the necessary components together for the first time. If successful, the combination of cema-cel and Foresight's IVD could mark a paradigm shift in how LBCL patients are managed in the clinic."

"We commend Allogene for pioneering ctDNA biomarkers and leading the way toward personalized medicine. The ALPHA3 study showcases their commitment to advancing patient care," said Jake Chabon, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, and Co-Founder of Foresight Diagnostics. "Foresight is proud to deliver a technology that stands singular in performance. We look forward to working alongside Allogene to improve outcomes for patients with LBCL."

About Foresight Diagnostics
Foresight Diagnostics is a privately held cancer diagnostics company and CLIA-registered laboratory. The company has developed a novel liquid biopsy testing platform for the measurement of minimal residual disease (MRD) that is significantly more sensitive than existing tests (with a detection limit below 0.0001%, or one part-per-million). The improved sensitivity of the Foresight's MRD assays can provide actionable information to physicians and biopharmaceutical companies to enable more personalized treatment approaches for patients with solid tumors and hematologic malignancies. For more information, please visit foresight-dx.com and follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.

About PhasED-Seq
The Foresight MRD platform is based on the Phased variant Enrichment and Detection by Sequencing (PhasED-Seq ™) technology. PhasED-Seq lowers the error profile of mutation detection in sequencing data by requiring the concordant detection of two separate non-reference events in an individual DNA molecule. By detecting more than one mutation, PhasED-Seq can more accurately distinguish tumor-derived cell free DNA (i.e., ctDNA) from healthy cell free DNA – enabling detection of ctDNA at levels below one part-per-million (<0.0001%). PhasED-Seq has been extensively

tested in thousands of patient samples.

About Allogene Therapeutics
Allogene Therapeutics, with headquarters in South San Francisco, is a clinical-stage biotechnology company pioneering the development of allogeneic chimeric antigen receptor T cell (AlloCAR T™) products for cancer and autoimmune disease. Led by a management team with significant experience in cell therapy, Allogene is developing a pipeline of “off-the-shelf” CAR T cell product candidates with the goal of delivering readily available cell therapy on-demand, more reliably, and at greater scale to more patients. For more information, please visit www.allogene.com, and follow @AllogeneTx on X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn.

About Cemacabtagene Ansegedleucel (Previously Known as ALLO-501A)
Cemacabtagene ansegedleucel, or cema-cel is a next generation anti-CD19 AlloCAR T™ investigational product for the treatment of large B cell lymphoma (LBCL). This product candidate is currently being studied in an ongoing potentially pivotal Phase 2 trial in relapsed/refractory (r/r) LBCL. The ALPHA3 pivotal Phase 2 trial in first line (1L) consolidation for the treatment of LBCL is expected to begin mid-2024. In June 2022, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy (RMAT) designation to cema-cel in third line (3L) r/r LBCL.

Cautionary Note on Forward-Looking Statements for Allogene
This press release contains forward-looking statements for purposes of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The press release may, in some cases, use terms such as "predicts," “projects,” "believes," "potential," "proposed," "continue," "estimates," "anticipates," "expects," "plans," "intends," "may," "could," “would,” “suggests,” "might," "will," "should" or other words that convey uncertainty of future events or outcomes to identify these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding intentions, beliefs, projections, outlook, analyses or current expectations concerning, among other things: ALPHA3 being a pivotal trial; the pace, timing and extent to which Allogene may enroll patients in its clinical trials or release data from such trials; the timing and ability to progress the ALPHA3 trial; the potential for Allogene’s product candidates to be approved; the potential benefits of AlloCAR T products; the ability of our product candidates to treat various stages and types of cancers; Allogene’s ability to broaden patient access to CAR T therapy; the incidence, severity and manageability of side effects of allogeneic CAR T products; the extent to which our clinical trials will support regulatory approval of our product candidates; the potential for off-the-shelf CAR T products; our ability to deliver cell therapy on-demand, more reliably, and at greater scale to more patients. Various factors may cause material differences between Allogene’s expectations and actual results, including, risks and uncertainties related to: our product candidates are based on novel technologies, which makes it difficult to predict the time and cost of product candidate development and obtaining regulatory approval; the extent to which the Food and Drug Administration disagrees with our clinical or regulatory plans or the import of our clinical results, which could cause future delays to our clinical trials or require additional clinical trials; we may encounter difficulties enrolling patients in our clinical trials; we may not be able to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of our product candidates in our clinical trials, which could prevent or delay regulatory approval and commercialization; and challenges with manufacturing or optimizing manufacturing of our product candidates. These and other risks are discussed in greater detail in Allogene’s filings with the SEC, including without limitation under the “Risk Factors” heading in its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2022, and in its Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2023. Any forward-looking statements that are made in this press release speak only as of the date of this press release. Allogene assumes no obligation to update the forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, after the date of this press release.

Allogene’s investigational oncology products utilize TALEN ® gene-editing technology pioneered and owned by Cellectis. ALLO-501 and cemacabtagene ansegedleucel (previously known as ALLO-501A) are anti-CD19 AlloCAR T™ investigational products being developed under a collaboration agreement between Servier and Allogene based on an exclusive license granted by Cellectis to Servier. Servier grants to Allogene exclusive rights to ALLO-501 and cemacabtagene ansegedleucel in the U.S.

AlloCAR T™ is a trademark of Allogene Therapeutics, Inc.
PhasED-Seq™ is a trademark of Foresight Diagnostics.

Foresight Contact:
Sara Head
press@foresight-dx.com

Allogene Media/Investor Contact:
Christine Cassiano
EVP, Chief Corporate Affairs & Brand Strategy Officer
Christine.Cassiano@allogene.com

Additional Allogene Media Contacts:
Leslie Bryant
Leslie.Bryant@allogene.com

Madeleine Goldstein
Madeleine.Goldstein@allogene.com

[i] Tilly H, Morschhauser F, Sehn LH, Friedberg JW, et al. Polatuzumab Vedotin in Previously Untreated Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma. N Engl J Med. 2022;386(4):351-363

[ii] Kurtz, D.M., Soo, J., Co Ting Keh, L. et al. Enhanced detection of minimal residual disease by targeted sequencing of phased variants in circulating tumor DNA. Nat Biotechnol 39, 1537–1547 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41587-021-00981-w

Roschewski M, Lindenberg L, Mena E, et al. Blood. 2023;142(Supplement 1):192-192. doi:10.1182/blood-2023-180007

[iii] Kurtz, D.M., Soo, J., Co Ting Keh, L. et al. Enhanced detection of minimal residual disease by targeted sequencing of phased variants in circulating tumor DNA. Nat Biotechnol 39, 1537–1547 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41587-021-00981-w

[iv] Park JH, Rivière I, Gonen M, Wang X, Sénéchal B, Curran KJ, Sauter C, Wang Y, Santomasso B, Mead E, Roshal M, Maslak P, Davila M, Brentjens RJ, Sadelain M. Long-Term Follow-up of CD19 CAR Therapy in Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. N Engl J Med. 2018 Feb 1;378(5):449-459. doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa1709919. PMID: 29385376; PMCID: PMC6637939

Wudhikarn K, Tomas AA, Flynn JR, Devlin SM, Brower J, Bachanova V, Nastoupil LJ, McGuirk JP, Maziarz RT, Oluwole OO, Schuster SJ, Porter DL, Bishop MR, Riedell PA, Perales MA. Low toxicity and excellent outcomes in patients with DLBCL without residual lymphoma at the time of CD19 CAR T-cell therapy. Blood Adv. 2023 Jul 11;7(13):3192-3198. doi: 10.1182/bloodadvances.2022008294. PMID: 36355838; PMCID: PMC10338201

Westin JR, Oluwole OO, Kersten MJ, Miklos DB, Perales MA, Ghobadi A, Rapoport AP, Sureda A, Jacobson CA, Farooq U, van Meerten T, Ulrickson M, Elsawy M, Leslie LA, Chaganti S, Dickinson M, Dorritie K, Reagan PM, McGuirk J, Song KW, Riedell PA, Minnema MC, Yang Y, Vardhanabhuti S, Filosto S, Cheng P, Shahani SA, Schupp M, To C, Locke FL; ZUMA-7 Investigators; Kite Members. Survival with Axicabtagene Ciloleucel in Large B-Cell Lymphoma. N Engl J Med. 2023 Jul 13;389(2):148-157. doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2301665. Epub 2023 Jun 5. PMID: 37272527

Source: Allogene Therapeutics, Inc.

Source: Foresight Diagnostics