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Podcast: Emergex CEO Questions mRNA Vaccines Against 'Wuhan Virus', Works On Universal Vaccines

Seeks More Partners For New Delivery Modes

by **Vibha Ravi**

Emergex CEO and ex-research director at the University of Oxford, Thomas Rademacher, spoke with *Scrip* about the myth of the "Wuhan virus" and why synthetic T-cell adaptive vaccines are expected to be superior to RNA/mRNA ones. More partners are being sought for additional delivery mechanisms, the founder of the UK-based, clinical-stage biotech says in this podcast interview.

The pandemic renewed interest in vaccines, and with [Pfizer Inc.](#) and [Moderna, Inc.](#) making mRNA vaccines a reality, and a hugely commercially successful one at that, more vaccine companies are in the limelight.

Dr Thomas Rademacher, founder CEO of UK-based, clinical stage biotech, [Emergex Vaccines Holding Ltd.](#), has been working on universal vaccines against a genus or class of viruses and argues that the T-cell based approach to developing vaccines is superior to one based on RNA or mRNA.

In this audio interview, Professor Rademacher, emeritus Professor of Molecular Medicine at University College London (UCL) and former clinical and research director of the Glycobiology Institute at the [University of Oxford](#), also mentions the ground-breaking research he and his colleagues Raymond Dwek and Raj Parekh conducted in the field of glycobiology, also coining the term itself.

Having acquired the proprietary microneedle array patch (MAP) intradermal drug delivery

system assets of US-based [Zosano Pharma Corporation](#) in October 2022, Emergex is also in talks with other companies developing alternate vaccine delivery systems, the CEO told *Scrip*.

Logistics hurdles, component shortages and prioritization of COVID-19 vaccines interrupted clinical development plans, but in June this year the company announced naNO-DENGUE trial results that demonstrate its dengue candidate, DengueTcP, was well-tolerated with no treatment-related serious adverse events during its first-in-human clinical trial.

Soon after, a multi-level collaboration agreement with the Molecular Biology Institute of Paraná (IBMP) in Brazil was entered into to co-fund Phase II and III studies in Brazil of Emergex's T cell-priming set-point candidates for dengue fever and betacoronavirus, the latter called CoronaTcP.

Both clinical trial product candidates successfully completed Phase I+ clinical trials in Switzerland and are nearing submission and evaluation by ANVISA, the Brazilian health regulatory agency, the company has said.

Professor Rademacher is on the look out for more such partnerships where governments can acquire a stake in Emergex, thus not just funding the company but also creating self-sufficiency in manufacturing vaccines.

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Time Stamps

00:08 Introduction

01:20 IBMP collaboration, giving equity stakes to government partners

05:00 Discussions with Latin America, Africa, Middle East, WHO

06:05 mRNA vaccines versus T-cell based synthetic vaccines

10:00 No such thing as 'Wuhan virus'

18:00 Why do COVID-19 tests not measure virus in blood?

19:40 Plans to counter antigenic shift and drift

21:44 Delays due to COVID-19

23:05 Comment on Dengvaxia from [Sanofi](#), QDenga from [Takeda Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd.](#); Own Bird flu vaccine

26:28 Zosano Pharma differentiator; To partner more microneedle companies

30:01 What will be the price differential for an Emergex vaccine?

31:14 Emergex's elevator pitch

33:00 Achievements in glycobiology, immunology come together

36:19 Hoping for pre-emergency, emergency use authorizations

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