The united army of experts helping improve **cancer treatment delivery**

A drug development company has assembled one of the world's largest and most diverse groups of global cancer experts to help accelerate the availability of new treatments for patients.

INTERVIEW WITH
Professor Sir Chris Evans
Chairman & Founder, Ellipses Pharma

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People with a range of cancers are seeing increasingly improved outcomes thanks to innovative drug development and new treatment regimes. Yet, despite these advances and high rates of recovery for patients, the development of new treatments often remains prolonged.

Contributing to cancer treatments

To overcome this, UK-based Ellipses Pharma — which focuses exclusively on the development of cancer medicine and treatments — has built a pioneering cloud-based platform to gather scientific and clinical insight from renowned cancer experts across the world.

More than 230 oncologists work independently within the company's Scientific Affairs Group (SAG) to help validate the selection of new cancer medicines. They also select patients who may benefit from each medicine and provide unbiased input during the development of each drug using real-world evidence.

Professor Sir Chris Evans, the company chairman and founder, says: "From the outset, we decided to build the most extensive SAG anywhere, so we could pick oustanding potential cancer treatments quickly and accelerate their development to get them to patients."

More input for better decisions

This approach was developed amid concerns that many cancer programmes fail to maximise this critical scientific advisory resource, resulting in poor decision-making, unnecessary delays in development and conflicts in the selection of potential treatments and the design of clinical trials.

Harnessing the expertise and input of the SAG enables Ellipses Pharma to capture a wider range of specialist views, leading to better decisions. Oncologists from leading cancer centres and research establishments around the world provide reviews of the scientific and clinical trial data for each asset alongside insights into local practices, patient populations and evidence of the competitive landscape.

Enabling targeted cancer treatment

Feedback is gathered from 50–70 experts simultaneously on each medicine taken forward. This scientific consensus can de-risk the development of new drugs by better understanding which patients will have the most benefit from each medicine.

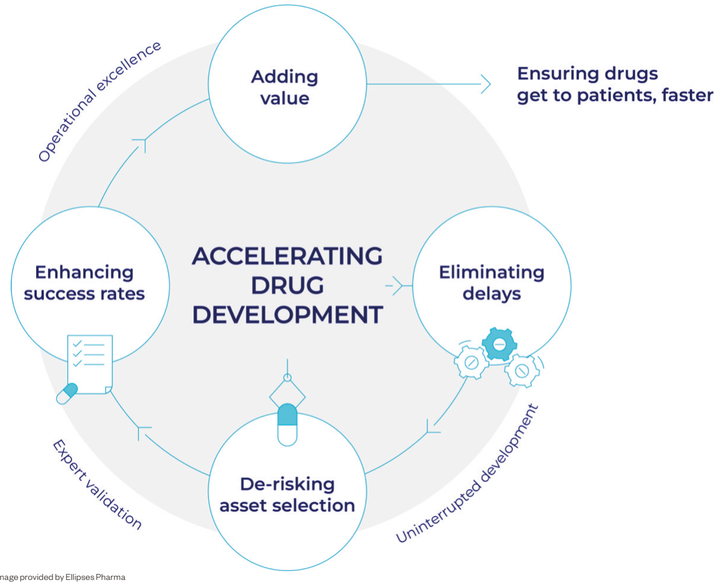

Image provided by Ellipses Pharma

The feedback can reveal new opportunities for those who may be candidates for the drug, for example, by showing that a particular molecule has applications in cancers that mutate and escape existing treatments, as well as in the tumours that it was originally intended to treat.

Increasing chances of success

The input from the SAG facilitates the adaptation of drug development in response to new data, with experts commenting on clinical trial design, patient stratification, biomarker selection and how to increase the chances of successfully developing a new drug.

The approach means the drug development company can open studies and enrol trial participants faster while the constant engagement with experts enables modification of treatment protocols, using real-world data from their clinics.

Fulfilment for oncology experts

The value of the approach is acknowledged by participating experts. A Newcastle University professor praised the ability to 'evaluate in stages' and complete work in their 'own time, when more convenient' while a professor at Cambridge University described the role as 'fulfilling academically and altruistically.'

An investigational cancer therapeutics specialist at the University of Texas, USA, adds: "Being part of the SAG allows me to make an impact in an even earlier stage of an asset when the investment decisions are made."

Improving therapies while lowering costs

Early evidence shows that the approach is working. Seven of the nine potential treatments, so far, chosen and developed with expert input remain in active development, putting the company above the conventional one-in-eight success rate seen in cancer development.

The company, which plans to expand its SAG membership to 300, says that further increasing the success rate will mean more approved therapies for patients and lower drug development costs. Several of their medicines and clinical trials — treating a broad range of cancers including lung, thyroid, breast cancer and leukaemia — are now gaining international attention. Recently, the progress of Ellipses drugs currently in trials was reported to the prestigious American Society of Clinical Oncology conference.

Think like cancer to beat cancer: the race to develop better medicines

A fresh approach to cancer drug development can help minimise the time it takes to advance therapies through clinical trials and get them to patients.

To beat cancer, drug developers need to "think like cancer." That is the view of Dr Rajan Jethwa, chief executive and founder of Ellipses Pharma, who adds: "We need to constantly evolve, continually multiply and rapidly accelerate." This, he believes, is the quickest way to get safe and effective drugs to patients when and where they need them.

Accelerating process to clinical trials

For a drug development company, that means a focus on accelerating the development of cancer medicines and treatments through innovative models. Pivotal to that is a combination of unbiased vetting to de-risk initial asset or drug candidate selection, with an uninterrupted funding flow to minimise the time it takes to advance products through clinical trials and reach patients.

Expanding on this approach adopted by the UK-based drug firm, its chairman and founder, Professor, Sir Chris Evans, says: "We are committed to maximising the breakthrough potential of the nascent treatments we take on, streamline their path through the clinic and shorten the time for them to have an impact on patients. Better, faster trials will mean more drugs for patients and more lives saved."

Unique drug development proposition

With an expanding pipeline of potential new medicines, the company is rapidly advancing its disruptive drug development proposition.

Central to that is the blind review process it has introduced with the Scientific Affairs Group — a global network of renowned cancer experts covering a range of cancer specialities with input from members focused on identifying the science with the clearest path toward translation into clinical application.

Once Ellipses adopts a potential medicine, the clinical and business development programmes are jointly built around clinical trials focused on patient needs and the commercial requirements for taking the drug forward.

> **Traditional drug development models have failed to keep pace with the speed and scale of cancer.**

Uninterrupted clinical trials

An uninterrupted funding model allows the company to allocate capital to each new potential drug as soon as it is needed.

Coupled with agile patient recruitment strategies, they can design novel and effective clinical trials. Dr Jethwa adds: "We have built a streamlined drug development engine that scales with asset acquisitions, ensuring we are always ready to run high-quality trials at the right time.

"By decoupling our fundraising from the asset development cycle, we can provide uninterrupted financial support for each development programme as required by individual programme needs and timelines."

Developing medicines for any cancer type

Their drug development model centres on having a robust and diverse pipeline — from late preclinical to clinical stage and from solid tumours to blood cancers. It addresses more than a dozen different types of cancers, including acute myeloid leukaemia (AML), breast cancer, lung cancer, thyroid cancer and others.

Medicines in development stages range from preclinical/pre-investigational new drug (IND) to phase 2 clinical studies and encompass several therapeutic modalities, including small molecules, receptor modulators, fusion proteins and even nanoparticle drug conjugates. The pipeline also contains additional exploratory programmes in several bispecific, bifunctional and monoclonal antibodies to treat a range of tumours.

Wider accessibility to cancer therapies

Professor Evans adds: "Our mission is to make the very best drugs and therapies available — at unprecedented speed, to patients worldwide. To achieve this goal, we seek out scientific discoveries with the best chances of success, regardless of tumour type, development stage, molecular target or therapeutic modality."

"Traditional drug development models have failed to keep pace with the speed and scale of cancer, so we decided to adopt a bold and ambitious approach that limits operational risk and maximises outcomes for patients," says Dr Jethwa.

INTERVIEW WITH
Dr Rajan Jethwa
CEO & Founder, Ellipses Pharma

Find out more at **ellipses.life**