

**DIVE BRIEF**

Roche's Genentech bets on radiopharmaceuticals in partnership with PeptiDream

The collaboration agreement will focus on developing new, targeted cancer drugs using PeptiDream's technology platform.

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Dive Brief:

- In a deeper move into radiopharmaceuticals, Roche's Genentech unit will collaborate with the Japan-based biotechnology company PeptiDream to develop "peptide-radioisotope" conjugates, PeptiDream said Wednesday.
- PeptiDream will use its peptide discovery platform system to identify and develop candidates for potential cancer drugs against targets Genentech will focus on. Under the deal, PeptiDream will receive \$40 million up front and is eligible to receive up to \$1 billion in milestone payments.
- The new deal expands upon an initial partnership formed between the two companies in 2015, which resulted in Genentech licensing its platform system technology the following year. The deal was expanded again in 2018.

Dive Insight:

Interest in radiopharmaceuticals has been taking off ever since Novartis won drug approval of a drug it acquired with the buyout of the biotech Endocyte. Other big drugmakers such as Merck & Co. and Bristol Myers Squibb are acquiring a stake in the new space that, while enticing, still faces several obstacles through development.

Targeted radiation drugs such as Novartis' drugs Pluvicto and Lutathera are more attractive than typical radiation therapy because the medicines can target cancer cells while sparing surrounding healthy cells. However, manufacturing and supplying radioisotopes is a long and complex process. Earlier candidates struggled to take off after development, and Novartis faced initial problems with supply.

PeptiDream has been in the radiopharma space for some time. The company, founded in 2006, said it sells and markets radiopharmaceutical products in Japan through its wholly-owned subsidiary PDRadiopharma.

Its work has caught the eye of other pharmaceutical companies and has several other partnerships under its belt including with Bristol Myers, Novartis and Astellas Pharma. San Diego-based biotech RayzeBio, which went public last week, has also partnered with PeptiDream and developed two targeted radiopharmaceuticals.

In the Genentech deal, PeptiDream will take the lead on the preclinical development of radioisotope drug conjugates. Once identified, Genentech will then take over on development and commercialization.

PeptiDream retains its right to develop and commercialize its drug conjugates in Japan.