ENDPOINTS NEWS

AbbVie drops two early-stage ADCs, including Pfizer-partnered oncology program

by **Kyle LaHucik** on August 24th, 2023

AbbVie removed two early-stage antibody-drug conjugates from its pipeline, per a Wednesday update to its pipeline webpage.

The Chicago-area Big Pharma culled ABBV-011 and the Pfizer-partnered ABBV-647. AbbVie and Pfizer did not immediately respond to inquiries.

ADCs have made a splash in the oncology R&D field in recent years, with AstraZeneca and Daiichi Sankyo's Enhertu changing the landscape for HER2 breast cancer and Pfizer willing to dole out $43 billion to buy Seagen and its pipeline of cancer medicines.

AbbVie was testing ABBV-011 as a monotherapy and in combination with another internal investigational asset, the anti-PD-1 monoclonal antibody known as budigalimab, or ABBV-181. The Phase I study began in 2018 and was testing the treatment in patients with relapsed or refractory small cell lung cancer.

Meanwhile, the PTK7-targeted ABBV-647 was being investigated in patients with PTK7-expressing non-small cell lung cancer. The Phase Ib trial began in early 2020 and was expected to have results in February of next year, per a clinicaltrials.gov entry. The asset also went by the names cofetuzumab pelidotin and PF-06647020.

During an earnings call in February, AbbVie chief scientific officer Thomas Hudson said the drugmaker planned to move the asset into Phase II dose optimizing studies this year. The executive had noted the target, PTK7, represents about 25% of patients with non-squamous non-small cell lung cancer.

Pfizer was co-development partner on the ADC.

"The therapy is, essentially, a guided missile," Marc Damelin, then-Pfizer associate director who worked on ADCs, said in early 2017, noting it had the potential to treat various cancers — in the stomach, esophagus, prostate and forms of leukemia. Shortly thereafter, he left for Mersana Therapeutics, an ADC biotech that has run into clinical hurdles and halved its workforce this summer.