

[News story: 'Living medicine' cancer therapy starts clinical trials](#)

London-based biopharmaceutical company [Autolus](#) is undertaking a novel cancer trial targeting T-cells.

Using CAR-T (chimeric antigen receptor T-cell) therapy, this 'living medicine' involves genetically engineering a patient's own immune cells to improve their cancer-fighting properties and then reinfusing these cells back into their bloodstream.

It could offer new hope to people with multiple myeloma, which is the second most common blood cancer. Multiple myeloma is characterised by malignant plasma cells that accumulate in the patient's bone marrow and produce abnormal proteins which can cause kidney problems, impairment of the immune system and further tumours to spread. There is currently no cure.

How it works

The study – which Autolus is calling APRIL – is for its AUT02 product.

AUT02 works by using a natural protein called APRIL ligand to target and bind with 2 cell receptors: B-cell maturation antigen (BCMA) and transmembrane activator and calcium modulator and cyclophilin ligand interactor (TACI).

Autolus believes that by adding APRIL ligand as a surface protein to the patients T cells it could improve the ability of the body's own immune system to detect and kill cancer cells. This simultaneous dual-targeting could also minimise the risk of the cancer cells escaping capture and so avoid the patient's disease from relapsing.

In the trial, patients with multiple myeloma will receive increasing doses of AUT02. This will help to establish a recommended dose. It will then assess the safety, tolerability and clinical activity at this dose.

Testing at Autolus' laboratory.

Minimise the risk of the cancer cells escaping treatment

Dr Christian Itin, Autolus' CEO said:

Breaking the defence mechanisms of cancers against T-cells is key to unlocking the curative potential of CAR-T cell therapies. AUT02 is a first example of Autolus' approach to specifically re-programme the patient's own T-cells to minimise the risk of the cancer cells escaping treatment.

With the start of this study we have transitioned to a clinical stage company; an important step on our path to build a fully integrated autologous CAR-T cell company with a portfolio of differentiated therapies for the treatment of patients with cancer.

Supporting the development of CAR-T therapy

An Innovate UK grant partially funded some of the early work on AUT02. Autolus was granted just over £1.48 million to test the effectiveness of patients T-cells to target multiple myeloma cells when re-engineered with the ligand that binds to BCMA and TACI. Evidence gathered here has directly contributed to progress the development of this product to clinical trials.

Autolus has also been awarded Innovate UK funding in an additional 2 projects. In the first, the company will receive up to £1.15 million to address the particular problem of CAR T-cells attacking T-cell lymphomas. The second will look to establish a scalable, commercially-viable manufacturing process for CAR-T therapies, with grant costs of up to £744,565.

Spun out of [University College London](#) in 2014, Autolus has gone on to receive funding worth £70 million from investment groups, [Arix](#), [Syncona](#) and [Woodford Patient Capital Trust](#).

The company was recently highlighted as a 'one-to-watch' – an ambitious business that we have supported whose achievements promise to change the world – as part of our 10th anniversary celebrations.

The next steps

As well as progressing AUT02, Autolus has a pipeline of products in development for haematological malignancies and solid tumours, for which it has recently progressed another product – AUT03 – into the clinic. This study involves 2 separate groups: children with leukemia and adults with lymphoma.

These 3 clinical trials will involve around 250 patients in hospitals across the UK. It is expected they will be completed by late 2021.

[News story: The Prime Minister reappoints Lord Green to the Board of Trustees of the Natural History](#)

Museum.

The Prime Minister has reappointed The Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint as a Trustee of the Natural History Museum for a period of 4 years, until 1 April 2022. Lord Green is also currently Chair of the NHM Board of Trustees.

The Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint began his career as a civil servant with the Ministry of Overseas Development. In 1977, he joined McKinsey & Co Inc, management consultants, before joining The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited in 1982 with responsibility for corporate planning activities. He fulfilled a variety of roles at HSBC, culminating in becoming Group Chief Executive on 1 June 2003 and Group Chairman on 26 May 2006.

Lord Green was Chairman of the British Bankers' Association from 2006 to 2010, and was made a life peer on 16 November 2010 as Baron Green of Hurstpierpoint. He was Minister of State for Trade and Investment jointly at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills from 2011 to 2013.

He is a former trustee of The British Museum. He is married with two daughters.

Trustees of the Natural History Museum are not remunerated. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code, and regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity by those appointed is declared. Lord Green has declared no such activity.

[News story: AAIB Special Bulletin S3/2017 – HPH Glasflugel 304 eS, G-GSGS](#)

This Special Bulletin contains preliminary information regarding a battery fire that occurred in a Front Electric Sustainer (FES) lithium polymer battery of an HPH Glasflugel 304 eS sailplane. Three safety recommendations are made relating to the incorporation of a warning system to alert the pilot to the presence of a fire or other hazardous conditions occurring within FES battery compartments.

[AAIB Special Bulletin S3/2017 – HPH Glasflugel 304 eS, G-GSGS](#)

[News story: British Hallmarking Council appoints new Chairman](#)

In accepting the appointment, to which he was elected for a three year period, Noel said:

I am delighted to be elected to lead this prestigious and important body. Hallmarking verifies the integrity of some of the most precious items we possess, both on a personal and a monetary level. Without the ability to trust these precious items are what they say they are our jewellery industry would be badly undermined. All that glitters is indeed not gold.

Noel's key challenges will be to ensure the integrity and portability of UK hallmarks following Brexit, to ensure that consumers understand the value of hallmarks, supporting and protecting the UK's jewellery industry through the Council's advice to government, and to maintain the excellent worldwide reputation of the UK's four Assay Offices in Birmingham, Edinburgh, London and Sheffield.

Noel Hunter is a former Director of Warwickshire County Council, was a former Warden of the Birmingham Assay Office. a Vice President of the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and also chairs the Myton Hospices, a Midlands based charity.

Noel's predecessor who led the Council for the last six years is Christopher Jewitt, who continues with a number of public duties as well as being a Director of Footprint Tools, Sheffield. In his opening address to the Council, Noel paid tribute to Christopher's prodigious and tireless work on behalf of the Council.

[News story: Launch of the Principles for Global Action](#)

During his visit to New York for UN General Assembly week the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, hosted an event to launch the Principles for Global Action on tackling the stigma of Sexual Violence.

Lord Ahmad and UN Under Secretary General and Special Representative on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten were joined by the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Presidential Adviser on Sexual Violence and Child Recruitment, Madame Jeanine Mabunda and Co-Founder of the Survivors Speak OUT network, Mr Kolbassia Haoussou.

A practical guide designed to raise awareness among policy makers of the challenges, issues and sensitivities of stigma from a survivor's perspective. The event brought together Member States, NGO's, academia and experts to see the launch of the Principles for Global Action.

With contributions from over 120 experts, 13 UN Agencies, NATO, the EU Commission, civil society, academia and the governments of Australia, Canada, France and the US the Principles document is truly a global document, it is owned by the International Community.

You can read the [Principles for Global Action](#) online and view the reports from the in-country workshops that took place in 2017.

You can also watch the event as it happened on [UN Web TV](#)