



Chugai and National Cancer Center Japan Enter into Joint Research Agreement

Chugai Joins “MASTER KEY Project”, an industry-academia joint project promoting research and development on rare cancers and genomic medicine

TOKYO, July 31, 2017 -- [Chugai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.](#) (TOKYO: 4519) announced that the signing of a joint research agreement with the [National Cancer Center Japan](#) regarding the “MASTER KEY Project,” an industry-academia joint project led by the National Cancer Center Japan. Chugai will collaborate with the National Cancer Center Japan to promote drugs research and development on rare cancers and genomic medicines.

Rare cancers are defined as cancers with a prevalence of fewer than six cases out of a population of 100,000 persons per year*. As there are an extremely small number of patients and there are more issues related to diagnosis and therapies compared to other types of cancers, there is no consolidated clinical data making it difficult to conduct research, development and clinical studies on these types of cancers.

* http://www.ncc.go.jp/jp/cis/divisions/06health_s/files/06health_s_work.pdf (Japanese only)

This project was started in May 2017 with the aim of integrating the advanced know-how, research support functions of the National Cancer Center Japan, and the seeds and development strategies of pharmaceutical companies to build a joint foundation for industry-academia to comprehensively and efficiently promote the development of therapies for rare cancers.

As a top pharmaceutical company in the oncology area, Chugai has participated in Japan’s first industry-academia collaborative nationwide cancer genome screening project, “SCRUM-Japan.” Chugai believes that the participation in the “MASTER KEY Project” will further strengthen its collaboration with academia, serving as a first step towards resolving the difficult issues related to rare cancers.

Through participation in the “MASTER KEY Project”, Chugai strives to conduct research and development on innovative drugs for rare cancers with limited treatment options and high unmet medical needs.

About the MASTER KEY Project

The MASTER KEY Project (Marker Assisted Selective Therapy in Rare cancers: Knowledge database Establishing registry Project) is an industry-academia joint project to promote research and development on rare cancers and genomic medicine led by the National Cancer Center Japan. 11 pharmaceutical companies are participating in the project. The project will conduct registry research to establish a large-scale database that will serve as basic data for research by collecting genomic information, clinical information, and prognosis data on patients with rare cancers. It will also conduct basket trials, a new clinical study method, promoting investigator-initiated or company sponsored clinical trial using drugs suitable for the biomarkers of patient populations with specific biomarkers without restricting or specifying cancer types. The registry clinical research commenced in May 2017.