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Growing a cell therapy industry: Opportunities and challenges

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Cell therapy represents the most recent phase of the biotechnology revolution in medicine. As with most remedies, cell therapies are based on ground-breaking scientific discoveries. Many of the achievements in the cell therapeutic space are quite recent. Importantly, progression of cell therapies brings a whole raft of scientific, manufacturing, regulatory and commercialization issues to be solved. Very few organizations that work in the space currently have all these capabilities in-house. Thus, it is clear that collaborations between academic institutions, pharmaceutical enterprises, biotechnology companies and other stakeholders are important to accelerate the therapeutic developments. In the UK, the major barriers for the growth of a cell therapy industry have been identified as being regulatory, business, manufacturing and supply chain related. To overcome these hurdles the Technology Strategy Board, a governmental agency, founded the Cell Therapy Catapult to provide a critical mass of expertise to bridge the translational gap from bench to bedside and address the issues described above. New ways of effective partnering for innovation and investment in innovation will be described as strategies to overcome manufacturing and regulatory challenges that exist today.

Biography

Johan Hyllner was appointed Chief Scientific Officer of the Cell Therapy Catapult in May 2013. As Chief Scientific Officer, he is responsible for external scientific relations, assessment of candidate projects and technical oversight of preclinical programs. He has extensive experience of the life sciences industry, having worked in cell and tissue companies in Europe and the US for over 15 years. He has been involved in numerous transactions and collaborations, establishment of scientific facilities, and the management of scientific programs in industry and academia. He has published more than 60 full length scientific papers.

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