

Global Blood makes second sickle cell bet



[Madeleine Armstrong](#)

Global Blood Therapeutics is upping its stake in sickle cell disease, but believes that there is room on the market for its new project inclacumab as well as its lead candidate, voxelotor. Perhaps inclacumab was too much of a bargain to resist – abandoned by Roche, it cost GBT just \$2m up front. However, GBT's stock sank 3% yesterday, perhaps on fears that the deal was a vote of no confidence for voxelotor. GBT plans to test the anti-P-selectin MAb in vaso-occlusive crises in sickle cell disease patients, making it a slightly different proposition to voxelotor, which the company plans to submit for accelerated approval in the wider sickle cell indication based on part A of the phase III Hope trial. Still, Hope did not find a significant improvement in vaso-occlusive crises, which might be one reason why GBT is hedging its bets. Roche had been studying inclacumab in coronary artery disease, but there is a rationale for evaluating the project in sickle cell disease: Novartis is studying a similarly acting candidate, crizanlizumab, in vaso-occlusive crises. Still, even if GBT benefits from its rival's groundwork, inclacumab would likely be a distant second to market, especially as the company does not plan to file an IND until 2021.

The sickle cell landscape

Project	Company	Mechanism	Trial(s)	Primary completion
Phase III				
Voxelotor	Global Blood Therapeutics	Sickle haemoglobin polymerisation inhibitor	Hope, NCT03036813	Part A data reported Jun 2018
Rivipansel*	Pfizer/ Glycomimetics	P-selectin inhibitor	NCT02433158; NCT02187003	Oct 2018; May 2019
SEG101/ crizanlizumab*	Novartis	Anti-P-selectin antibody	NCT03264989	Sep 2020
Phase II				
Sevuparin*	Modus Therapeutics/ Ergomed	Cell adhesion molecule inhibitor	NCT02515838	Oct 2018
CordIn	Gamida Cell	Hematopoietic cell therapy	NCT02504619	Dec 2018
NiCord	Gamida Cell	Hematopoietic cell replacement	NCT01590628	Jan 2019
LentiGlobin	Bluebird Bio	Beta-globin gene therapy	NCT02151526	Feb 2019
IMR-687	Imara	PDE9 inhibitor	NCT03401112	Jun 2019
IW-1701	Ironwood Pharmaceuticals	Soluble guanylate cyclase stimulant	Strong-SCD, NCT03285178	Jul 2019
Canakinumab	Novartis	IL-1B antibody	NCT02961218	Jun 2020
*Trials in vaso-occlusive crises only; Source: EvaluatePharma.				

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Evaluate HQ
44-(0)20-7377-0800

Evaluate Americas
[+1-617-573-9450](tel:+16175739450)

Evaluate APAC
[+81-\(0\)80-1164-4754](tel:+8108011644754)

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