

Takeda bails out Ovid



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[Failure in Angelman](#) syndrome had laid Ovid low, but today the group got a reprieve thanks to a deal amendment with Takeda that brought an up-front fee of \$196m – more than the value of Ovid’s market cap last night. The tie-up assigns rights to Ovid’s pipeline lead, soticlestat, to the Japanese group, which now plans to start phase III trials in Dravet and Lennox-Gastaut syndromes. The compound, a CH24H inhibitor, had been discovered at Takeda’s labs under a separate 2017 tie-up between the two companies. But this is now being dissolved, with Ovid relinquishing rights in return for the much-needed cash bailout, plus future milestones and royalties. Soticlestat’s [phase II Elektra trial in the two childhood epilepsies read out positively last year](#), driven by a strong result in Dravet syndrome. At the time Ovid was leading development, and had a small milestone obligation to Takeda, but the junior partner’s \$87m third-quarter cash balance was likely insufficient to fund soticlestat to approval. The Angleman failure cut Ovid’s options further, and the group had little choice but to accept Takeda’s lifeline today. Last month Jazz bought another Dravet/Lennox-Gastaut player, GW, for \$7.2bn, and this might have focused Takeda’s mind.

Selected childhood epilepsy projects

Project	Company	Mechanism of action	Dravet	Lennox-Gastaut
Epidiolex	Jazz (ex GW)	Cannabinoid	Marketed	Marketed
Fintepla	Zogenix	SSRI & Sigma-1 receptor regulator	Marketed	Ph3
Belviq	Eisai	5-HT2C receptor agonist	Ph3	NA
Soticlestat	Takeda/Ovid	Cholesterol 24-hydroxylase inhibitor	Ph2	Ph2
Translarna	PTC Therapeutics	30S ribosomal subunit blocker	Ph2	NA
STK-001	Stoke Therapeutics	SCN1a mRNA antisense	Ph2	NA
EPX-100	Epygenix Therapeutics	5-HT receptor agonist	Ph2	NA
Cannabidiol & tetrahydrocannabinol	Tilray	Cannabinoid	Ph1	NA
Carisbamate	SK Biopharmaceuticals	Unknown	NA	Ph1

Source: EvaluatePharma.