

## Another endorsement as Unum goes beyond the CAR-T



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As competition among the many CAR-T players shifts investor focus towards safety switches and follow-on approaches like engineered T-cell receptors and tumour-infiltrating lymphocytes, one company – Unum Therapeutics – is looking to go further still.

The private start-up already counts Sanofi's venture arm as an investor, and yesterday it got its second key endorsement in the shape of Seattle Genetics. If Unum's science can overcome some of the shortcomings of current cell therapy approaches, the simple logic of combining a chimaeric receptor with an antibody could become an extension of Seattle's work on antibody-drug conjugates.

This is surely why Seattle signed on the dotted line. Under [yesterday's tie-up](#) the company handed across \$25m up front plus a commitment to put \$5m into Unum's next private financing; Unum came out of stealth mode last October with a \$12m series A round that was led by Fidelity and Atlas Venture and included Sanofi-Genzyme Bioventures.

Unum's focus is a variation on the autologous T-cell therapy theme, using transfection to express a chimaeric receptor on a patient's T-cells. But this receptor is not a CAR, specific for a single antigen, but rather an antibody-coupled T-cell receptor (ACTR) designed to bind any appropriately designed antibody.