

thought to be as a result of mutations, not as the cause of the tumour. Duesberg and colleagues have shown that aneuploid cells respond differently to chemotherapy: those with a 50% increase in chromosome number developed resistance in as little as nine days, compared with normal cells that remained sensitive to treatment⁵. This led to the conclusion that frequent rearrangement of chromosomes results in the high levels of mutation observed in cancer cells^{5,6}, which subsequently might lead to drug resistance. This finding could help to explain why only cancer cells and not normal cells develop resistance to chemotherapy, and how this resistance might be prevented or treated.

- 5 Duesberg, P.H. *et al.* (2000) Explaining the high mutation rates of cancer cells to drug and multidrug resistance by chromosome

reassortments that are catalyzed by aneuploidy. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A.* 97, 14295–14300

- 6 Bialy, H. (2001) Aneuploidy and cancer – the vintage wine revisited. *Nat. Biotechnol.* 19, 22–23

Miscellaneous

Johns Hopkins launches Cell Engineering Institute

The John Hopkins University School of Medicine (Maryland, USA) is to launch an Institute for Cell Engineering (ICE) with the aid of an anonymous \$58.5 million donation and a \$23.8 million grant from the State of Maryland. The Institute will be

designed as a multidisciplinary research incubator where scientists from various departments at the university will be able to come and conduct stem cell research related to their fields of expertise.

The site will occupy one third of the 40,000 square feet basic research facility that is planned to be completed by 2003. Until then, temporary laboratories will be made available. The Institute's research is expected to focus on modifying and reprogramming human cells to be used as potential transplants for conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, diabetes, heart failure and spinal cord injury.

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People

Two new executive appointments created at Quintiles

The Informatics section of Quintiles (Quinternet Informatics; Research Triangle Park, NC, USA) has appointed two new executives to its team. Peter Hoover has been promoted to the new position of Chief Operating Officer, while Thomas Halzer has been brought into the new position of Senior Vice-President of Sales and Marketing.

Hoover was previously Executive Vice-President of Quinternet Informatics, having moved from being President of Rx Remedy in 1999. Hoover has also held a number of positions at IMS America, including Senior Vice-President and General Manager of the Healthcare Division.

Balzer has come from being Senior Vice-President of Pharmaceutical Services at NDC Health Information Services. Previously, he was a manager for the consulting firm ZS Associates and prior to this, a partner with Management Technologies.

Baddour joins Merlin Board

Raymond Baddour has been appointed to join the Board of Directors of Merlin Technologies (Boston, MA, USA). Baddour has extensive expertise in the

pharmaceutical industry, having been a cofounder of several companies including Amgen, Hyseq and Ascent Pediatrics. He is also a Business Advisory Committee member of Medical Science Partners, which invests in technologies developed at Harvard Medical School and its affiliated hospitals. Chalom Sayada, CEO of Merlin Technologies hopes that Baddour's scientific and clinical development experience will help Merlin as it prepares to commercialize its *Chlamydia pneumoniae* detection technology.

Baddour is also currently Lamot du Pont Professor of Chemical Engineering, Emeritus at MIT and has previously been the head of this department for seven years. He has served on many committees for national professional organizations, the government and MIT.

New CEO for Avidex

James Noble has been appointed as the new CEO of Avidex Ltd (Oxford, UK), a company that develops T cell-based therapies. Noble has previously held several non-executive Board positions in companies including Oxford Glycosciences, Powderject Pharmaceuticals, Advanced Medical Solutions, Oxagen Ltd and AdProTech Ltd.

Previous appointments include Finance Director at British Biotech, Director of Kleinwort Benson Ltd and Chairman of Avidex Ltd. This comes at the same time as the announcement that the company has secured £10 million in funding from Advent Venture Partners and private investors and shareholders.

Cancer and cardiovascular research experts join ExonHit

ExonHit (Paris, France) has appointed two additional members, Pierre Corvol and Dominique Stehelin, to its scientific advisory board. Corvol is currently Professor of Experimental Medicine at the College de France (Paris, France) and Stehelin is currently Director of the Development and Cancer Mechanisms, CNRS unit of the Pasteur Institute (Lille, France). Their expertise in the cardiovascular and cancer fields is hoped to help the company to extend its tools and services based on its DATAS splicing technology.

Corvol is also currently Chairman of the INSERM Counsel and is known for his work on the genetics of human hypertension and cardiovascular research. Meanwhile, Stehelin is known for his work on the molecular basis of cancer, especially through his discovery of the first oncogene that led the group's laboratory at the Medical Center, San Francisco (CA, USA) to receive a Nobel Prize.