

SPEAKER Q&A

Manfred Koegl

In anticipation of the upcoming European Protein Degradation Congress, we caught up with Manfred Koegl, Director of Oncology Research at Boehringer Ingelheim. He gave us the big pharma perspective on the exciting future of targeted protein degradation before he takes to the stage in Basel this May.



Manfred Koegl
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Please can you kindly introduce yourself

Manfred Koegl, group leader at cancer cell signalling in Boehringer Ingelheim, one of the pharmaceutical industry's top 20 companies.

What will you be talking about at the European Protein Degradation Congress?

I will discuss targeted degradation of BCL6 and SMARCA2.

Why is targeted protein degradation exciting the field?

This new mode of action promises to make targeting of known drug targets more effective as well as make hitherto intractable targets accessible for drug discovery.

Apart from oncology, which other therapeutic areas are of interest for adopting PROTACs?

I do not think that a particular therapeutic area can be excluded - so: all of them.

What's your (team's) main area of focus relating to PROTACs/ Molecular glues?

The improvement of their pharmacological properties to maximise vivo activity and efficacy.

If as the industry hopes, the Arvinas trial is a huge success, what does this mean for the industry? What next?

A success of the Arvinas trial should win over the remaining sceptics and help to secure the investments needed to turn other PROTAC attempts into successes.

What are your thoughts on how to retain PROTAC potency along with selectivity over other targets?

This does not seem to be an issue – PROTACs in general are more selective than classical small molecules.

What key technologies are required to identify proteins for degradation?

CRISPR, inducible degradation tags.

Are there any other research areas within pharma that you find as exciting as targeted protein degradation?

With respect to technological innovation and promise: No.

Connect with Manfred at the European Protein Degradation Congress this May 22-23rd 2019 in Basel, Switzerland.

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