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The press release indicated that Immutep is a French company and is a 100 percent subsidiary of Prima BioMed. Immutep develops a suite of products based on its Lymphocyte Activation Gene 3 (LAG-3) technology. Immutep's lead product IMP321 works by binding to a receptor on antigen presenting cells (APCs) such as dendritic cells to activate them.

The preclinical study, to be conducted at Yamaguchi University and supported by NEC, will investigate the use of antigen presenting cell activator IMP321 as an adjuvant, together with peptide antigens believed to be involved in hepatocellular cancer.
Commenting on the collaboration Marc Voigt, chief executive of Prima, said, "We are very pleased to be able to assist NEC with this preclinical study. The use of IMP321 as an adjuvant to a vaccine is different to the other combination approaches being used for our planned clinical trials. The opportunity to broaden the application of IMP321 for other uses is exciting."

Yamaguchi University president Dr Masaaki Oka, MD, commented, "We look forward to working on this program and exploring the use of IMP321 together with our vaccine. We believe that this combination could offer a unique treatment opportunity."
Mr Osamu Fujikawa, general manager, Corporate Business Development Division, NEC Corporation said, "It is exciting for our company to be able to support and oversee the study of this new combination. We hope to have good results in this study which would allow us to advance to the next step."