

Passion for Innovation.
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Press Release

Daiichi Sankyo Appoints Ken Takeshita, MD as Global Head of R&D

February 22, 2021

[Company](#)

Tokyo, Munich and Basking Ridge, NJ – February 22, 2021 – Daiichi Sankyo Company, Limited (hereafter, Daiichi Sankyo) today announced Ken Takeshita, MD will be named the new Global Head of Research & Development as of April 1, 2021. On that date, Dr. Junichi Koga will retire from the position, after a successful and industrious career, including more than 12 years at Daiichi Sankyo.

Dr. Takeshita joins Daiichi Sankyo from Kite Pharma, a Gilead Company, where he was Senior Vice President and Global Head of Development since 2019, and interim Head of Research. Ken is a highly experienced physician with deep experience in oncology and rare diseases. Prior to Kite, he served as Senior Vice President of Clinical Research at Sorrento Therapeutics and Corporate Vice President of Clinical R&D at Celgene. He has led full-scale global drug development programs across hematological and solid tumors at Kite, Celgene and Amgen. Before joining the biopharmaceutical industry, Ken was on the faculty in Hematology at Yale University School of Medicine and New York University School of Medicine. He earned a bachelor's degree in molecular biology from Harvard University and his medical degree from Yale University. He received post-doctoral training in hematology, oncology and developmental biology at Yale and in hematopoiesis at University of Tokyo.

“We are thrilled to welcome Ken into the Daiichi Sankyo family to lead global R&D in our continued transformation into a global oncology leader and to pursue world-class science and technology,” said Sunao Manabe, President and CEO, Daiichi Sankyo Company, Ltd. “Ken brings remarkable depth and breadth of experience to our organization – from first-hand patient care to overseeing more than 20 registrational trials leading to many regulatory approvals. I am confident that Ken is the right leader to bring Daiichi Sankyo into our next phase of drug discovery and development, as we innovate and deliver practice-changing medicines to our global community.”

"I am honored to join the Daiichi Sankyo R&D organization to seek to extend and improve lives of patients and eliminate cancer altogether," said Dr. Ken Takeshita. "I have watched Daiichi Sankyo build and grow with admiration. I look forward to bringing the Company's antibody drug conjugates and new, innovative modalities to more patients and to working in a unique company culture with Japanese roots, fitting of a world-class global organization," said Dr. Takeshita.

"Junichi has been instrumental in shaping our current R&D portfolio, particularly in spearheading the establishment of our biologics research organization, out of which our incredibly promising ADC pipeline was born," said Dr. Manabe. "We thank him for his dedication to patients and to Daiichi Sankyo and look forward to continuing to work with him as an advisor to me and our leaders in 2021."

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