

Brazil Hosts Prof. Bruce Levine to Discuss Advancements and Challenges in CAR-T Cell Therapy

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On September 4th, our institution in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil, had the privilege of hosting Professor Bruce Levine, Barbara and Edward Netter Professor in Cancer Gene Therapy, Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania for an insightful discussion on the challenges and advancements in CAR-T cell therapy.

During his visit, Prof. Levine, delivered a presentation titled "Translating T Cell Therapies From Boutique to Global" to an audience of over 100 attendees at the Blood Center of Ribeirão Preto (<https://www.hemocentro.fmrp.usp.br/>). Following the lecture, he engaged with researchers from Blood Center, and provided valuable insights into the operations of the Nucleo de Terapia Avançada (Nutera) Ribeirão Preto—a specialized center equipped for large-scale CAR-T cell production.

This visit sparked essential conversations regarding the adaptation of CAR-T cell therapy to the unique challenges faced by developing countries. To make CAR-T cell therapy accessible in these regions, several critical factors were

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discussed, including: i) cost reduction. Exploring ways to reduce the financial burden associated with CAR-T cell therapies, enabling more affordable treatments for patients. ii) streamlined regulations. Simplifying and expediting regulatory approval processes to make these therapies more accessible and cost-effective, iii) local manufacturing. Establishing local CAR-T cell manufacturing facilities in developing countries, reducing the reliance on costly imports and fostering economic growth and iv) training, providing specialized training for healthcare professionals to ensure the successful implementation of CAR-T cell therapy.

This visit was especially significant because Hemocentro de RP invested in cutting-edge infrastructure and resources to produce CAR-T cells, marking a fundamental step in the development of CAR-T therapies in Brazil. The facility is expected to play a crucial role in conducting the first fully developed clinical study in Brazil. The CARTHEDRALL-01 phase I/II clinical study is (https://www.hemocentro.fmrp.usp.br/terapia/) approved by ANVISA and will be conducted by the Hemocentro de Ribeirao Preto in partnership with the Butantan Institute (https://butantan.gov.br/).

Events like these serve as an inspiration to developing countries, encouraging the exchange of ideas and the collective effort to overcome challenges, ultimately paving the way for the implementation of innovative cell therapies in South America.

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