GlobalData»

The recent news that a research group at the University of Leeds have effectively treated aggressive brain tumours by injecting viruses into patients adds more evidence that an immunotherapy treatment approach could be the way forward, says GlobalData a leading data and analytics company.

Dr. Maxime Bourgognon, Senior Analyst in Oncology at GlobalData , commented, "This approach works by stimulating the body's immune system to fight the tumours. In a proof-of-principle study, a UK-based research group has shown the potential of injecting intravenously an oncolytic virus in patients with brain tumors to enhance the potency of immunotherapy. There is a strong rationale for priming the immune response by releasing a large amount of antigens, using oncolytic viruses, and unlocking the T-cell immune response, based on immune checkpoint inhibitors.''

In an interview with GlobalData, a leading physician specializing in the field of immuno-oncology said, "We know that T-cells cannot do the job until dendritic cells tell them to do it. So we believe in this quite aggressively, and we think now, finally, in the era of checkpoint blockade we'll get to see the results of oncolytic viruses a bit better."

Dr. Bourgognon continued, ''While the immune checkpoint inhibitor Opdivo (nivolumab) has faltered at its last stage of clinical development, I would anticipate that opportunities based on combinations remain for immunotherapies to improve the survival of patients with brain tumors."

The use of combinatory approaches, such as the administration of both oncolytic virus and checkpoint modulators, is poised to become a critical strategy to improve the prognosis of patients with brain tumors.

Dr. Bourgognon concludes, "There is a particular belief from key opinion leaders in brain cancer that certain immunotherapies, such as checkpoint inhibitors, will benefit from combination therapy."