



For Immediate Release
July 21, 2021

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MCEDC Congratulates and Welcomes BioNTech to Montgomery County, Maryland

With Acquisition, Global Leader Chooses Gaithersburg for U.S. Manufacturing Facility

ROCKVILLE, Md. — German-based BioNTech has announced that they will soon be joining Montgomery County, Maryland's growing list of world-renowned international companies in the "Immunology Capital Next to the Nation's Capital." BioNTech is acquiring a Gaithersburg manufacturing facility and cell therapy R&D platform from Kite, a unit of Gilead Sciences, to support the development of BioNTech's expanding pipeline of novel cell therapies.

With its widely used Pfizer-partnered COVID-19 vaccine, BioNTech has recently risen to international prominence and is looking to add an innovative neoantigen T-cell receptor (TCR) therapy to its portfolio of cutting-edge individualized cancer therapies with the Kite purchase. BioNTech's new Montgomery County manufacturing plant will increase the company's cell therapy production to strengthen its supply for U.S. clinical trials of its cancer treatments.

"The development of individualized cancer therapies is at the core of our work at BioNTech. The acquisition of the Kite facility and its individualized TCR platform allows us to accelerate the clinical development of our cell therapies in the U.S. and advance at the forefront of individualized cell therapies," Ugur Sahin, M.D., CEO and Co-founder of BioNTech, said in their recent release. "It also strengthens our presence in the U.S."

In addition to accelerating BioNTech's work in its promising cancer cell therapy research, the deal also gives the company a life sciences manufacturing footprint in Montgomery County, Maryland, home of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which includes the National Cancer Institute (NCI). BioNTech is expected to retain the existing workers at the site and hire additional employees there.

"When a global leader such as BioNTech selects Montgomery County as the U.S. location to fulfill its next generation manufacturing capabilities, it signals our growing maturation as a world immunology capital," said Benjamin H. Wu, President & CEO of the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC). "We look forward to supporting BioNTech's expansion plans and seeing their promising cancer therapies come to fruition."

BioNTech is the latest international attraction of life sciences companies that have chosen Montgomery County for its tremendous local opportunities for growth and prospective partnerships. Recent international attractions have included Aurinia Pharmaceuticals (Canada), Genetron Health (China), Innovent Biologics (China) and Nobelpharma (Japan) — joining global leaders like AstraZeneca (UK), GlaxoSmithKline (UK), Qiagen (Germany), Ascentage Pharma (China) and Macrogen (South Korea) that are already located in Montgomery County.

"We're proud that BioNTech has selected Montgomery County as the location to expand its operations," said County Executive Marc Elrich. "We are one of the nation's top life sciences clusters and our proximity to the FDA and NIH, along with our high-quality workforce, makes us the ideal place for expansion. BioNTech joins a growing list of companies that have recognized that great things are happening in Montgomery County."

"We are thrilled that BioNTech will build on its lifesaving work and support more of the high-skilled jobs that help fuel our economy," County Council President Tom Hucker said. "There is real value in locating here next to the nation's capital with nearby access to numerous federal labs, 18 federal agencies, three major airports and the nation-leading diversity that characterizes our county."

The BioNTech and Kite transaction is expected to close by the end of July 2021. You can read the companies' joint press release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210719005385/en/>.

Read more from MCEDC on the life science growth surge in Montgomery County: nearly \$8 billion invested in life science companies with a Montgomery County presence in 2020, and the latest on new lab space and competitive rents.

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About MCEDC

The Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) is the official public-private economic development organization representing Montgomery County, Maryland. Created in 2016, MCEDC is led by a Board of Directors of business executives. Its mission is to help businesses start, grow and relocate in Montgomery County by helping them gain access to top talent, business and market intelligence and prime locations. For more information, visit our website. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.