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HEALTH CARE

CBSET builds 110,000-square-foot Waltham facility to triple capacity, house foreign biotechs



CBSET is building out a 110,000-square-foot facility at 153 Second Ave. in Waltham.

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Reporter, Boston Business Journal

A Massachusetts-based preclinical biomedical research organization is expanding its presence with a bigger facility, a move that it says will allow it to create a gateway for foreign biotechs entering the U.S.

CBSET is building out a 110,000-square-foot facility in Waltham. The expansion comes after Arlington Capital Partners, a Washington, D.C.-area private investment firm, made a majority growth investment in the Massachusetts company.

Founded by Elazer Edelman and Peter Markham in 2006, CBSET has been providing translational research and product development services for customers working in medical device, pharmaceutical, diagnostic and biomedical research for two decades.

CBSET started with 10 people and has now grown to over 125 employees, said Markham, who serves as CEO. CBSET will exit its main research campus in Lexington as part of the move to Waltham, where Markham said the company will have “three-fold the capacity.” The company will retain its breeding facility

in Grafton at Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine campus.

The new Waltham facility is at 153 Second Ave. – a former Sanofi-Genzyme property – and will open in the fourth quarter of 2026.

CBSET's partner grows amid expansion

As CBSET grows, so will another company that organization has been partnering with for almost a decade. This partnership is a model for the shared goal of helping more foreign biotechs expand into the U.S.

Cilcare was founded in France in 2014 by three former Sanofi leaders – Celia Belline, Marie-Pierre Padelou and Sylvie Pucheu – to tackle hearing disorders and related diseases. When the company decided to expand in the U.S., it did so by working with CBSET.

Back in 2017, Belline said Cilcare wanted to expand its lab platform in the U.S. and be able to do the auditory safety studies that were required by the FDA for drug applications.

"This was a missing piece. All the preclinical work around drug development, gene and cell therapy, or even implantable devices, in hearing were missing worldwide," Belline said. "There was nothing in between the academic lab and the patient bed."

The partnership between Cilcare and CBSET began to change that.

Cilcare has had a team on site at CBSET's Lexington facility since 2017, with about 10 full-time employees in the U.S. currently, Belline said. Cilcare also continues to rotate employees from France into the Lexington lab.

"When they go back to France they bring back the experience, and we end up with an international team that is advanced in techniques in the United States, and they bring techniques from France. And so it's really, really beneficial," Markham said.

Cilcare has its own pipeline of drugs in development, and recently announced it would conduct a clinical trial of its lead drug candidate, CIL001, at Massachusetts General Hospital.

CBSET's expansion of its laboratory capacity also gives Cilcare the ability to scale up its hearing research operations.

The work between Cilcare and CBSET has also advanced the field of hearing medicine. The companies say that they've generated thousands of data points on novel drug candidates and gene therapy approaches in hearing.

Now, they want more companies from outside the U.S. to benefit from a similar setup. The pair aims to create a U.S. gateway

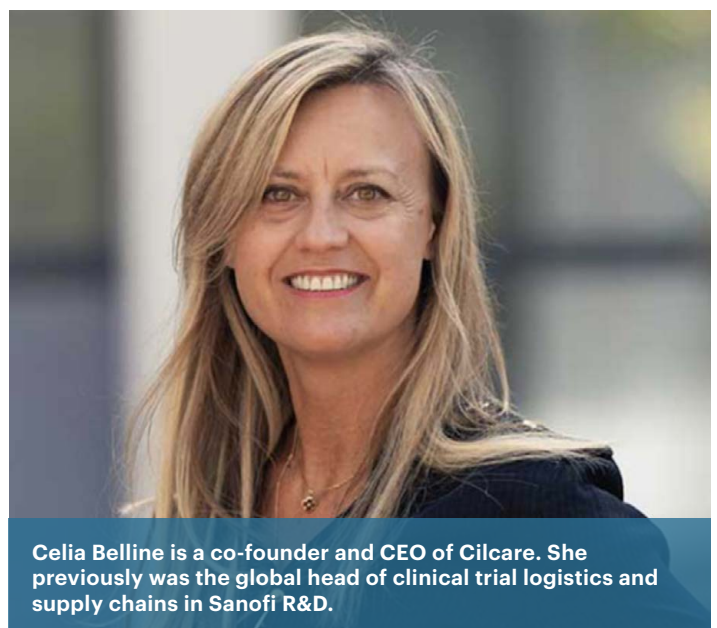
for foreign biotechs looking to set up their first American footprint.

For a small foreign company looking to expand into the U.S., Markham said "it's a very high bar" to try to interact with U.S. regulatory agencies and grow here without boots on the ground.

"At the new facility in Waltham, we'll have areas where companies can have people in residency, and so that's sort of an important point, and it will be a select few where the company's area of research is both interesting to us, but where we can help them," Markham said.



Peter Markham
is CEO and co-founder of CBSET.



Celia Belline is a co-founder and CEO of Cilcare. She previously was the global head of clinical trial logistics and supply chains in Sanofi R&D.