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Johns Hopkins University and Bayer HealthCare have entered into a five-year collaboration agreement to jointly develop new ophthalmic therapies targeting retinal diseases. The goal of the strategic research alliance is to accelerate the translation of innovative approaches from the laboratory to the clinic, ultimately offering patients new treatment options for several retinal diseases.

Under the agreement, researchers at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins and Bayer will jointly conduct research activities evaluating new targets and disease mechanisms, drug delivery technologies, and biomarkers for back-of-the-eye diseases with high unmet medical need. Both parties will contribute personnel and infrastructure to address important scientific questions. Bayer will have an option for the exclusive use of the collaboration results. Financial terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

"There is a critical need for new therapies that treat a variety of serious diseases of the eye," said Mr Peter J McDonnell, director of the Wilmer Eye Institute and professor of ophthalmology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He added, "Additional research will allow us the opportunity to make significant advances in this area."

The collaboration aims to discover and develop innovative drugs for the treatment of serious back-of-the-eye diseases that affect many people worldwide, such as Age-related macular degeneration, Diabetic macular edema, Geographic atrophy, Stargardt's disease and Retinal vein occlusion.

"Bayer is strongly committed to further expanding its research efforts in the area of retinal diseases. The Wilmer Eye Institute's deep understanding of eye disease biology and patient care and Bayer's expertise in drug discovery and development in ophthalmology complement each other perfectly. We are pleased to partner with this renowned institute, which is among the leading scientific and clinical institutions in ophthalmology worldwide," said Mr Andreas Busch, head of global drug discovery and member of the Executive Committee of Bayer HealthCare.

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