BioSpectr
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Immuneel Therapeutics: Bengaluru's Bet on Affordable CAR-T

19 October 2026 | Features

If ImmunoACT proved India could build its own CAR-T therapy, Immuneel is proving the market has room for more than one. Backed by two of the best-known names in Indian and global oncology, the Bengaluru company has taken India's second approved CAR-T to patients and is now raising its sights beyond the country.

immuneel

Problem

Relapsed B-cell lymphoma remains hard to treat once chemotherapy and transplant options run out. CAR-T can change that outcome, but for Indian patients access has been limited by price, by the small number of centres able to deliver it and, until recently, by having just one domestic product to choose from.

Product

Qartemi (varnimcabtagene autoleucel) is an autologous CD19-directed CAR-T therapy with a 4-1BB co-stimulatory domain. Immuneel licensed it from Spain's Hospital Clinic de Barcelona, where the preclinical and early clinical work was done, and developed and manufactures it in Bengaluru. Like other autologous CAR-T products, it is made from each patient's own T cells and given as a single infusion.

Proof

CDSCO approved Qartemi in January 2025 for adults with relapsed or refractory B-cell non-Hodgkin lymphoma, making it the second CAR-T therapy cleared in India. The approval rested on the company's phase 2 IMAGINE study, run at centres including Narayana Health in Bengaluru, Apollo Cancer Centre in Chennai and PGIMER Chandigarh, in which 83.3% of patients responded at 90 days. The company says the therapy is now available at more than 30 hospitals in over 10 cities, with partners including Narayana Health, Apollo Hospitals, Christian Medical College and Manipal Hospitals.

People

Immuneel was co-founded by Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Pulitzer Prize-winning oncologist and author Dr Siddhartha Mukherjee, who both sit on its board. The company is led by CEO Amit Mookim, who has framed Qartemi's commercial run as evidence that India can deliver world-class CAR-T outcomes at a fraction of Western costs.

Purse

In June 2026 Immuneel raised over Rs 100 crore in a Series B round. New investors Singularity AMC, Rainmatter by Zerodha and a group of high-net-worth individuals joined existing backers Eight Roads Ventures, F-Prime Capital and Mazumdar-Shaw. For patients, the company prices Qartemi at about one-tenth of a comparable US product, and in July 2026 a zero-cost EMI programme of up to Rs 25 lakh was announced with Arogya Finance.

Plan

The Series B money is going into more GMP manufacturing capacity, a next-generation cell and gene therapy pipeline, and continued commercial roll-out of Qartemi. Immuneel is also looking outward, with planned entry into Asia Pacific and Middle East markets and co-development partnerships in Australia and Southeast Asia.

Why it matters: Two approved Indian CAR-T products mean real competition, wider hospital reach and a stronger case that India can make advanced therapies for the region, not just for itself.

FAST FACTS

Company	Immuneel Therapeutics Pvt. Ltd.
HQ and plant	Bengaluru, Karnataka
Origin	Licensed from Hospital Clinic de Barcelona
Co-founders	Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Dr Siddhartha Mukherjee
CEO	Amit Mookim
Lead product	Qartemi (varnimcabtagene autoleucel), CD19 CAR-T

Approval	CDSCO, January 2025; India's second approved CAR-T
Indication	Adults with relapsed or refractory B-cell NHL
Latest funding	Series B of over Rs 100 crore, June 2026
Series category	Startup (DPIIT 2026 test): under 10 years old, venture-backed through Series B, independen R&D-led
Next	Scale GMP capacity; APAC and Middle East entry; next-gen pipeline

Disclaimer: *This profile is independent editorial content based on publicly available information and company disclosures as of 19 October 2026. It is not sponsored and does not constitute medical, clinical or investment advice.*