

Dr. Dennis C. Liotta '70

Dennis C. Liotta is Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Chemistry and the executive director of the Emory Institute for Drug Development (EIDD) at Emory University. He obtained his PhD at City University of New York and completed postdoctoral research at Ohio State University before joining Emory in 1976. Over the past three decades, his research has focused on the discovery of novel antiviral, anticancer, and anti-inflammatory therapeutic agents, most notably the breakthrough anti-HIV drug, emtricitabine, co-invented with Drs. Raymond F. Schinazi and Wonbong Choi. Emtricitabine, currently marketed as Emtriva, is a component of a number of combination therapies used to treat HIV, including Truvada, Atripla, Complera, Stribild, Genvoya, Odefsey, Biktarvy, and Descovy. Truvada is the only combination therapy approved for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Dr. Liotta also co-invented Epivir (lamivudine), a component of combination therapies such as Combivir, Trizivir, Epzicom, Triumeq, Dutrebis, and Delstrigo. It is estimated that more than 90 percent of HIV-infected patients in the United States take or have taken drug combinations that include either Emtriva or Epivir.

Dr. Liotta's other inventions include Epivir-HBV, the first drug approved to treat hepatitis B; elvucitabine, for treating HIV (phase 2); Q-122, for treating hot flashes in postmenopausal women and women with breast cancer (phase 2); and CT7001, a CDK7



inhibitor for treating various cancers (successfully completed phase 1 clinical trials). He also co-founded Pharmasset, Inc., which developed the breakthrough anti-hepatitis C drug, Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), subsequently acquired by Gilead Sciences.

Dr. Liotta has authored approximately 290 peer-reviewed research publications and holds ninety issued U.S. patents. He is also the director of the Emory Institute for Drug Development, co-founder of Drug Innovation Ventures at Emory (DRIVE), and the founding editor-in-chief of *ACS Medicinal Chemistry Letters*. He has been honored with numerous accolades, such as the Alfred Burger Award in Medicinal Chemistry, the Wallace H. Carothers Award, the American Chemical Society–Bristol Myers Squibb Smissman Award, Emory's Thomas Jefferson Award, and the Herty Medal.