This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Endocrine/metabolic disease				
Diabetes	Not applicable	<p>Mouse and human tissue studies suggest inducing transdifferentiation of α cells to β cells could help treat type 1 diabetes (T1D). In mouse models of T1D, the peptide caerulein induced the stepwise transdifferentiation of α cells to β cells to δ cells, thereby transiently increasing total β cell mass and decreasing blood glucose levels compared with no treatment. In islets from patients with T1D, increased ratio of δ cells to α cells correlated with increased disease progression, suggesting aberrant transdifferentiation of β cells to δ cells could drive T1D pathology. Next steps include identifying the molecular target of caerulein involved in promoting islet cell transdifferentiation.</p> <p>SciBX 7(34); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.1013 Published online Sept. 4, 2014</p>	Unpatented; available for partnering	<p>Piran, R. <i>et al. Cell Death Dis.</i>; published online July 31, 2014; doi:10.1038/cddis.2014.311 Contact: Fred Levine, Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, La Jolla, Calif. e-mail: flevine@sbmri.org</p>