

GRÜNENTHAL GROUP

Press Release

Grünenthal GmbH, Nordic Bioscience A/S and Argenta Discovery 2009 Ltd. enter into research collaboration in fibrosis

- *New approach to networked research and development brings research experts, companies and laboratories together to develop new treatment option for patients with fibrosis*
- *In fibrosis patients, an overproduction of connective tissue can ultimately lead to organ failure*

Aachen, Germany, Copenhagen, Denmark, and Harlow, UK October 21, 2015 – Grünenthal GmbH, Nordic Bioscience A/S and Argenta Discovery 2009 Ltd., a Charles River company, announced today a collaboration to improve the research and development of therapeutic approaches in multi-organ fibrosis. With a particular focus on fast-progressing patient subpopulations, the collaboration aims to develop new and improved preclinical and clinical assays to optimize the identification of new therapies.

“Grünenthal strives to expand beyond pain to support patients who suffer from diseases with high unmet needs, especially in niche indications. We believe that in fibrosis, there is ground breaking science occurring that could drive a change in treatment practice. Our Innovative Medicines Unit based in Aachen has been launched with the mandate in mind to bring companies, academic institutions and other experts together do drive innovation forward in novel areas”, said Dr. Klaus-Dieter Langner, Chief Scientific Officer of Grünenthal.

Dr. Simon Read, Head of the Innovative Medicines Unit at Grünenthal, added: “There is a high unmet need in this patient subpopulation of fibrosis. This collaboration aims to address two major issues that have hampered the selection and progression of novel therapeutics in the fibrosis area – namely the predictability of preclinical assays and thereafter the subsequent selection of patients that have a “progressing or fast progressing” fibrotic disease. Our hope is to use biomarker signatures developed in clinic to titrate back into preclinical assays and provide a common thread from the research labs to clinic.”

“We at Nordic Bioscience are pleased to participate in these types of initiatives. It is more progressive for our industry to think in terms of networked R&D and bringing experts together early. Our scientists have pioneered an understanding of organ fibrosis and biomarker selection of sub-segments of diseases. As partner of this collaboration network, we are looking forward to generate results that can improve the situation, and generate treatment options for patients with various forms of fibrosis”, said Morten Karsdal, CEO at Nordic Bioscience.

John Montana, Executive Director, Charles River Laboratories, stated: “For many years, the limited translational value of preclinical models to the clinical setting has hampered progress on therapeutics in fibrosis. We believe that our expertise in fibrosis research will allow us to work collaboratively with the experts in Grünenthal and Nordic Bioscience to establish assays with improved predictability. We are looking forward to making a meaningful impact to the preclinical science of fibrosis.”

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About Fibrosis

Fibrotic diseases include multi-organ diseases such as systemic sclerosis (SSc), sclerodermatous graft versus host disease, and nephrogenic systemic fibrosis, as well as organ-specific disorders such as lung, liver and kidney fibrosis. Whilst etiology varies, the common pathway of abnormal deposition of extracellular matrix, followed by the disruption of the normal architecture of affected organs is shared across these diverse diseases. Ultimately abnormal organ architecture leads to organ dysfunction and eventual failure.

Given the wide variety of affected organs and chronic nature of the pathophysiological processes, these diseases pose one of the most serious health problems in current medicine. It has been estimated that up to 45%¹ of the mortality in the Western developed countries is now caused by fibrotic diseases and may be higher in underdeveloped or developing countries.

About Grünenthal

The Grünenthal Group is an independent, family-owned, international research-based pharmaceutical company headquartered in Aachen, Germany. We are an entrepreneurial specialist delivering true benefits to patients. By sustainably investing in research and development above the industrial average, we are committing to innovation in order to treat unmet medical needs and bring value-adding products to markets. Grünenthal is a fully integrated research & development company with a long track record of bringing innovative pain treatments and state-of-the-art technologies to patients.

Altogether, the Grünenthal Group is present in 32 countries with affiliates in Europe, Australia, Latin America and the US. Grünenthal products are sold in more than 155 countries and approx. 5,300 employees are working for the Grünenthal Group worldwide. In 2014, Grünenthal achieved revenues of € 1.154 bn. More information: www.grunenthal.com.

About Nordic Bioscience

Nordic Bioscience is a biotech organization with research facilities in Copenhagen, Denmark. The company comprises of three divisions: Biomarkers & Research, Clinical Development, and a FDA certified laboratory. We are a group with the capacity and specialist expertise to develop protocols for, manage, and support studies ranging from those in early preclinical phases to the pivotal phase IIIs required for marketing authorization. We incorporate, where relevant, our novel biomarkers for diagnosis and monitoring of disease progression. To learn more, visit www.nordicbioscience.com.

About Argenta Discovery 2009 Ltd., a Charles River company

Charles River provides essential products and services to help pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, government agencies and leading academic institutions around the globe accelerate their research and drug development efforts. Our dedicated employees are focused on providing clients with exactly what they need to improve and expedite the discovery, early-stage development and safe manufacture of new therapies for the patients who need them. To learn more about our unique portfolio and breadth of services, visit www.criver.com.

Reference:

1 T.A. Wynn - Cellular and molecular mechanisms of fibrosis. J. Pathol., 214 (2008), pp. 199–210

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