

ASX ANNOUNCEMENT

Benitec executes licence from University of New South Wales for “Silencing” Beta III Tubulin Gene to advance lung cancer program

Sydney Australia, 8 August 2013: Benitec Biopharma Ltd (ASX: BLT) is pleased to announce that it has executed a licensing agreement with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) related to the company’s Tribetarna™ program, a therapy for lung cancer.

The licence grants Benitec exclusive rights to use RNA interference technology to silence the beta III tubulin gene in order to overcome chemotherapy resistance in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC). The licence also allows the development and commercialisation of a “Companion Diagnostic” to aid in the identification of patients with NSCLC at risk of developing resistance to chemotherapy.

Tribetarna™ has been developed with Benitec Biopharma’s research collaboration partner, the Children’s Cancer Institute Australia (CCIA), University of New South Wales (UNSW). The data generated to date has demonstrated the efficacy of the approach in a preclinical model of human lung cancer. Execution of this licence enables Benitec, and its partners, to advance to the next stage of the development program, which is to undertake toxicity testing in preparation for a clinical trial as well as developing a diagnostic, which is integral to future clinical and commercialisation plans.

Advanced stage lung cancer is associated with a very poor prognosis due to rapid development of resistance to chemotherapy drugs by the tumour cells. As a result, current treatment regimens generally have a modest and limited effect on the course of the disease. This resistance has been shown to be associated with the beta III tubulin gene¹. Genetic therapy using ddRNAi to knock down the beta III tubulin gene represents a novel approach to improving the effectiveness of current chemotherapy drugs, thus significantly prolonging survival and representing a high potential opportunity for Benitec’s gene silencing technology.

Benitec Chief Business Officer, Mr Carl Stubbings commented: “Using a companion diagnostic to identify patients at risk of developing resistance to chemotherapy, adds a new dimension to Tribetarna’s™ potential ability to meet a critical medical need. It is an important part of the development program and will enhance the overall value of this treatment. Therapies that include a companion diagnostic will assist in tailoring the right therapy to the right patient. Furthermore companion diagnostics increase the chances of clinical trials meeting their endpoints.”

Benitec Chief Executive Officer, Dr Peter French commented: “Now that we have demonstrated strong proof of principle, and executed the licence agreement with UNSW, we are in a position to move to the next step of the program which is to undertake toxicity testing in preparation for a clinical trial. Benitec’s recent successful \$10.7 Million Capital Raising has provided the company with an opportunity to move Tribetana™ into the clinic in the latter part of 2014.”

Dr Kevin Cullen of NewSouth Innovations Pty Ltd (the technology transfer company of UNSW), commented on the announcement saying: “We are delighted to be entering into this licensing agreement with Benitec Biopharma Ltd after a significant and successful research collaboration over the last few years.”

¹ McCarroll JA, Gan PP, Liu M, Kavallaris M. β III-Tubulin Is a Multifunctional Protein Involved in Drug Sensitivity and Tumorigenesis in Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer *Cancer Res*; 70(12); OF1–9.



For more information please contact: Carl Stubbings | Chief Business Officer
Phone: +61 (02) 9555 6986 | cstubbings@benitec.com | www.benitec.com

About non-small cell lung cancer: Lung cancer is a very common disease worldwide. Lung cancer is classified into two types – small cell and non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). NSCLC comprises the great majority (~85%) of cases of lung cancer. Treatment depends on various factors, but may involve surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or a combination thereof. Unfortunately, NSCLC eventually becomes resistant to these drugs, sometimes very rapidly. Late-stage NSCLC has a very poor prognosis and is the biggest cause of cancer-related deaths globally.

About Benitec Biopharma Limited: Benitec Biopharma Limited is an ASX-listed biotechnology company (ASX Code: BLT) based in Sydney, Australia. The company has a pipeline of in-house and partnered therapeutic programs based on its patented gene-silencing technology, ddRNAi. Benitec is developing treatments for chronic and life-threatening human conditions such as Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, wet age-related macular degeneration, cancer-associated pain, drug resistant lung cancer and oculopharyngeal muscular dystrophy based on this technology. In addition, Benitec has licensed ddRNAi technology to other biopharmaceutical companies who are progressing their programs towards the clinic for applications including HIV/AIDS, retinitis pigmentosa and Huntington's disease. For more information on Benitec refer to the Company's website at www.benitec.com

About The University of New South Wales: UNSW is Australia's leading research-intensive university focused on science, technology and the professions and is ranked in the world's top 100. UNSW has strong industry links and a proud tradition of sustained innovation, focusing on areas critical to our future – from climate change and renewable energies to life-saving medical treatments and breakthrough technologies. www.unsw.edu.au