

## ASX ANNOUNCEMENT

### CALIMMUNE GAINS APPROVAL TO ADVANCE ITS ddRNAi-BASED HIV CLINICAL TRIAL

**Sydney Australia, 26 June 2014** Benitec Biopharma Limited (ASX Code: BLT, OTC: BTEBY) is pleased to announce that its licensee in the HIV/AIDS field, privately owned US-based Calimmune, Inc., has received approval to move ahead with the second patient cohort of its Phase I/II clinical trial of Cal-1, an innovative ddRNAi-based therapy. This follows a review of trial data from the first cohort of patients by the Data Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB), which confirmed that none of the four participants experienced any serious adverse events or side effects from the therapy.

Cal-1 targets the gene for CCR5, a molecule that is critical for HIV binding to the body's T cells. Silencing it in the patient's blood stem cells with the ddRNAi DNA construct is designed to provide the cells with resistance to HIV infection, as well as helping to retain immune system function.

Calimmune has designed the trial, which is being conducted at sites in San Francisco and Los Angeles, to assess the safety of the therapy, to determine the ease of use and feasibility of the ddRNAi approach for HIV/AIDS patients and to evaluate what, if any, side effects there may be.

The participants had all previously been on anti-retroviral drugs but had discontinued taking them because of side effects or treatment fatigue.

The second group of 3-4 participants will not only get Cal-1 but will also get a preconditioning regimen with the aim of making the therapy more effective.

"We are very excited and encouraged by this development," Louis Breton, Chief Executive Officer of Calimmune was reported as saying. "This recommendation from the DSMB is an important step in bringing this potential one-time therapy to the patients, and takes us closer to our ultimate goal of eradicating AIDS."

Dr Peter French, CEO of Benitec, said, "This is a very pleasing result for Calimmune and for ddRNAi in general. It provides important early validation of the safety of this ddRNAi approach for human therapeutic applications. Cal-1 is potentially a one-shot curative approach for HIV/AIDS. This trial, along with our trial of ddRNAi for hepatitis C, demonstrates that the use of Benitec's gene silencing technology clinically is gaining momentum. We look forward to further encouraging news as this trial proceeds."



For further information, please contact the persons below, or visit the Benitec website at [www.benitec.com](http://www.benitec.com).

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#### ***About Benitec Biopharma Limited***

Benitec Biopharma Limited is an ASX-listed biotechnology company (ASX Code: BLT) (OTC Code: BTEBY) 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](http://www.benitec.com).

#### ***About Calimmune***

Calimmune is a clinical-stage HIV gene medicines company focused on developing innovative cell-based therapies for HIV. The company's stem cell technology was discovered in the labs of Nobel Laureate, Dr. David Baltimore (Caltech) and Dr. Irvin Chen (UCLA AIDS Institute). Calimmune is also developing a rich product candidate pipeline to address the needs of different types of individuals at different states of HIV infection and with different levels of treatment experience.