



ASX/Media Release

Benitec Patent Estate Strengthened Further with Another Gene Silencing Graham Family Patent Allowed in the US

8 August 2011, Melbourne, Australia: Benitec Ltd.(ASX:BLT), a world leader in gene silencing for human therapeutics, announced today that the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has issued a Notice of Allowance on 4 August 2011 for US patent application 10/346,853 "Synthetic Genes and Genetic Constructs Comprising Same" ('853). '853 is another Divisional of the US Graham patent family. This further strengthens Benitec's dominant patent position in the RNA-based gene silencing.

The allowed claims of the Graham '853 patent are complementary to those of the foundational and re-issued '099 Graham patent, and the recently allowed '726 Divisional of the Graham patent, and provide Benitec with still broader patent protection for use of its gene silencing technology (DNA-directed (dd)RNAi) for human therapeutic applications. The claimed constructs have two sequences of "about 20-30" consecutive nucleotides identical in sequence to a region of a target gene encoding a viral DNA polymerase, a viral RNA polymerase, or a viral coat protein in a mammalian cell. The patent strongly protects the use of ddRNAi for viral disease therapeutics, including, but not limited to, Benitec's hepatitis B program and Tacere Therapeutics' hepatitis C program.

"Benitec's patent position in ddRNAi increasingly dominates the gene silencing field. This latest patent allowance further increases the value of Benitec's patent assets, especially in the field of viral disease" said Dr Peter French, Benitec's Chief Executive Officer. He continued, "ddRNAi has the potential to permanently silence any genes involved in chronic life threatening disease and, as such, is likely to provide the basis for development of a broad range of novel human therapeutics."

Typically, a granted patent is issued by the USPTO about 4-6 months after a Notice of Allowance. Benitec and CSIRO (from whom Benitec is exclusive licensee of these Graham patents) are currently awaiting decisions from the USPTO on two other pending Divisional applications within the Graham patent family. The applications contain claims that would even further strengthen Benitec's dominant position in ddRNAi.

For Further Information

Dr Peter French
Chief Executive Officer
Tel: +61 (0)412 457 595

pfrench@benitec.com

Media enquiries:
College Hill Life Sciences
Sue Charles (Global)
Daniel Gooch (Europe)
Tel: +44 (0)20 7866 7866

benitec@collegehill.com

Andrew Geddes (Australia)
Tel: +61 (0)408 677 734

Rebecca Skye Dietrich (US)
Tel: +1 (857) 241 0795

About Benitec www.benitec.com

Benitec Limited is developing novel treatments for chronic and life-threatening conditions based on a transformational technology, DNA-directed RNA interference (ddRNAi) - sometimes called expressed RNAi. The technology's potential to address unmet medical needs and, potentially, to cure disease results from its demonstrated ability to permanently silence genes which cause the condition.

Benitec now either owns or exclusively licences from CSIRO more than 40 granted or allowed patents in the field of RNA interference for human therapeutic applications. Patents have been granted in key territories such as the USA, the UK, Japan, Europe, Canada and Australia. In addition, Benitec has almost 50 patent applications pending for which it is the owner or exclusive licensee from CSIRO, and has further intellectual property under development as a result of its pipeline program.

Benitec trades on the Australian stock exchange under the symbol "BLT". The Company was founded in 1997 and has been publicly held since 2001. The Company aims to deliver a range of novel ddRNAi-based therapeutics to the clinic in partnership with the pharmaceutical industry. In-house it is pursuing a focused R&D strategy in infectious diseases, cancer and chronic cancer-associated pain, as well as programs with licensees that have advanced to pre-clinical and/or clinical trials.