



ASX RELEASE

Benitec Hepatitis programs boosted by grant and notice of allowance of further ddRNAi patents

Thursday October 6, 2011. Sydney, Australia. Benitec Ltd (ASX:BLT), a world leader in RNA-based gene silencing for human therapeutics, is pleased to report further significant patent progress in its already extensive patent estate, particularly in the area of its therapeutic hepatitis programs.

US patent no 8008468, entitled "RNAi expression constructs with liver-specific enhancer/promoter" has been granted. It contains claims to ddRNAi expression constructs specifically for RNAi in the liver, and supports Benitec's hepatitis program with claims to methods of using the liver specific ddRNAi expression constructs to suppress the hepatitis virus.

Benitec has also received a Notice of Allowance on US application 11/883645. This patent also contains claims directly relating to hepatitis therapy using Benitec's ddRNAi technology. The claims are to an RNAi construct with a single promoter for targeting Hepatitis C virus to inhibit the level of Hepatitis C virus in cells, tissues and organs, together with methods for inhibiting Hepatitis C.

Benitec's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Peter French, said "Allowance of this US patent application complements Benitec's other US patents 7803611 and 7727970, which are also directed to constructs and methods for inhibiting the level of Hepatitis C virus in cells, tissues and organs."

Benitec expects the application to be granted in the coming months.

Furthermore, following grant of European patent 1725660 "Multiple promoter expression cassettes for simultaneous delivery of RNAi agents" earlier this year, the patent has been validated in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Monaco, Luxembourg, Denmark, Spain, Italy and Sweden.

These patents, which have a term to 2025, are licensed to Tacere Therapeutics for Hepatitis C, and their allowance and/or granting represent an important step in confirming Benitec's dominance in the gene silencing landscape using ddRNAi.

For Further Information

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About Benitec www.benitec.com

Benitec Limited is developing novel treatments for chronic and life-threatening conditions based on gene silencing using a transformational technology; DNA-directed RNA interference (ddRNAi) - sometimes called expressed RNAi. The technology's potential to address unmet medical needs and 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 Securities Exchange (ASX) under the symbol "BLT". The company was founded in 1997 and has been publicly held since 2001. Benitec aims to deliver a range of novel ddRNAi-based therapeutics to the clinic in partnership with the pharmaceutical industry. Benitec 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.