

ASX ANNOUNCEMENT

Benitec Biopharma's Hepatitis C patent granted in China

Sydney, October 8, 2012: Benitec Biopharma is pleased to announce that the Company has received notification that its Chinese patent application no. 200680010811.3, "RNAi expression constructs" has been allowed.

The allowed claims protect an RNA expression cassette that encodes RNAi agents of two key sequences utilised by Benitec Biopharma's exclusive licensee Tacere Therapeutics in its TT-034 anti-hepatitis C virus (HCV) gene silencing molecule. Further sequences, including the third sequence of TT-034, will be the subject of separate (divisional) patent applications.

HCV infection is a leading cause of liver disease worldwide and is the leading cause of cause of cirrhosis, hepatocellular carcinoma, and liver transplantation. Despite the 2011 addition of protease inhibitors, a new class of anti-HCV drugs and the first new small molecule drugs approved to treat HCV in over a decade, an arduous therapeutic regimen using the current standard of care is still unable to provide clinical benefit to a large segment of the patient population. The World Health Organisation estimates around 170 million people are chronically infected, with 350,000 deaths from HCV-related liver disease each year. Prevalence rates are highest in China and other Asian countries.

As previously announced, Tacere Therapeutics and Pfizer have recently published two key scientific papers this year demonstrating the safety and efficacy of this construct in appropriate HCV models. This data was the result of extensive investment in the program by both Tacere and Pfizer over the past four years. The collaboration focused on completing all necessary studies for submission of an investigational new drug application (IND) to the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA).

Benitec's gene silencing technology is called DNA-directed RNA interference, or ddRNAi. It is capable of specifically turning off any gene, particularly those causing or progressing disease.

"Treatment of Hepatitis C is of considerable interest worldwide. A number of very large deals with major pharmaceutical companies have recently occurred for HCV treatments. While there are very promising new drugs coming to market for this disease, there will be a new generation after those. We believe that this approach can be a significant enhancement over these emerging therapies. The granting of this patent for a novel approach to the problem of hepatitis C in the country where it has one of the highest reported prevalence rates represents significant value for this application of ddRNAi," said Benitec's CEO, Dr Peter French.



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, also called expressed RNAi. Benitec Biopharma is developing treatments for chronic and life-threatening human conditions such as cancer-associated pain, Hepatitis B, drug resistant lung cancer and Oculopharyngeal muscular dystrophy based on this technology. In addition, Benitec Biopharma has licensed ddRNAi technology to other biopharmaceutical companies for applications including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and retinitis pigmentosa.

For more information please contact

Dr Peter French, Chief Executive Officer

Phone: +61 (02) 9555 6986

Email: pfrench@benitec.com