

AVI BioPharma and Collaborators Publish Data From Preclinical Studies Demonstrating the Antimicrobial Efficacy of PMO Oligomers Against Burkholderia Cepacia Complex in The Journal of Infectious Diseases

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Also Published Is an Editorial, Beyond Antibiotics: New Horizons in Treating Burkholderia Species Infections, Commenting on the Studies

BOTHELL, WA, May 07, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) --AVI BioPharma, Inc. (NASDAQ: AVII), a developer of RNA-based drugs, and its collaborators, including the National Institutes of Health, today announced the publication online in The Journal of Infectious Diseases of new data demonstrating the potential utility of phosphorodiamidate morpholino oligomers (PMOs) as antimicrobial agents. The publication describes preclinical studies demonstrating the in vitro and in vivo efficacy of peptide-conjugated phosphorodiamidate morpholino oligomers (PPMOs) against the Burkholderia cepacia complex by targeting acpP, a protein known to be important for bacterial growth. Published in conjunction with the study is an editorial entitled New Horizons in Treating Burkholderia Species Infections which addresses these studies and the underlying PMO technology opportunity as antimicrobials.

"These studies provide continuing validation of the broad potential of our leading RNA-based technologies, including our PPMO and PMOplus(TM) chemistries, as anti-infective therapeutics," commented J. David Boyle II, Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of AVI BioPharma. "Based on these results, as well as results from our other anti-infective therapeutic programs, including our programs targeting influenza and the Ebola and Marburg hemorrhagic fever viruses, we are committed to continuing the development of innovative anti-infective therapeutics utilizing our RNA-based technologies and leading PMO chemistry expertise."

About Burkholderia Cepacia Complex

Burkholderia cepacia complex (Bcc) comprises 17 related species of gram-negative bacteria. Bcc is associated with a rapid decline in pulmonary function and increased mortality. It is often present in individuals with underlying lung disease, such as cystic fibrosis, where it is found in up to 20 percent of patients.

About AVI BioPharma

AVI BioPharma is focused on the discovery and development of RNA-based drugs utilizing proprietary derivatives of its antisense chemistry (morpholino-modified phosphorodiamidate oligomers or PMOs) that can be applied to a wide range of diseases and genetic disorders through several distinct mechanisms of action. Unlike other RNA therapeutic approaches, AVI's antisense technology has been used to directly target both messenger RNA (mRNA) and its precursor (pre-mRNA), allowing for both up- and down-regulation of targeted genes and proteins. AVI's RNA-based drug programs are being evaluated for the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy, including an ongoing systemic Phase 1b/2 clinical trial of exon skipping with AVI-4658. AVI's antiviral programs have demonstrated promising outcomes in Ebola Zaire and Marburg Musoke virus infections and may prove applicable to other viral targets such as Junin, influenza, HCV or Dengue viruses. For more information, visit www.avibio.com.

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: The statements that are not historical facts contained in this release are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to, the results of research and development efforts, the results of preclinical and clinical testing, the effect of regulation by the FDA and other agencies, the impact of competitive products, product development, commercialization and technological difficulties, and other risks detailed in the company's Securities and Exchange Commission filings.

SOURCE: AVI BioPharma, Inc.