AVI BioPharma Announces Presentations on Exon Skipping Drug AVI-4658 for Treatment of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy at International Congress on Neuromuscular Diseases

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BOTHELL, WA, Jul 16, 2010 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) --

AVI BioPharma, Inc. (NASDAQ: AVII), a developer of RNA-based drugs, today announced upcoming presentations on AVI-4658, the Company's exon skipping therapy for the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy, at the XII International Congress on Neuromuscular Diseases taking place July 17-22, 2010 in Naples, Italy. The presentations will highlight results from Study 28, the recently completed Phase 1b/2 clinical trial of AVI-4658.

Stephen B. Shrewsbury, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at AVI, will present on Sunday, July 18 during poster session 5B: Muscular Dystrophies: State of the Art in Diagnosis & RNA Modulation for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. Dr. Shrewsbury's presentation is titled "Current Progress with the Systemic Administration Trial of AVI-4658, a Novel Phosphorodiamidate Morpholino Oligomer (PMO) Skipping Dystrophin Exon 51 in Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD)."

In addition, Dr. Francesco Muntoni, Professor of Pediatric Neurology and Head of the Dubowitz Neuromuscular Centre at the UCL Institute of Child Health, London, England will present on Monday, July 19 during a late-breaking poster session. His presentation is titled "Systemic Administration of AVI-4658 a Phosphorodiamidate Morpholino Oligomer (PMO) Restores Dystrophin Expression in Selected Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) Boys in a Dose Dependent Manner."

Both presentations will be posted on the AVI BioPharma website the afternoon of Monday, July 19.

AVI-4658 is AVI's lead drug candidate being developed as a systemically administered treatment for a substantial subgroup of patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), a genetic muscle wasting disease caused by failure to produce dystrophin.

About AVI BioPharma

AVI BioPharma is focused on the discovery and development of novel RNA-based therapeutics for rare and infectious diseases, as well as other select disease targets. Applying pioneering technologies developed and optimized by AVI, we are able to target a broad range of diseases and disorders through distinct RNA-based mechanisms of action. Unlike other RNA-based approaches, our technologies can be used to directly target both messenger RNA (mRNA) and precursor messenger RNA (pre-mRNA) to either down-regulate (inhibit) or up-regulate (promote) the expression of targeted genes or proteins. By leveraging our highly differentiated RNA antisense-based technology platform, we have built a pipeline of potentially transformative therapeutic agents, including a clinical stage Duchenne muscular dystrophy candidate and anti-infective candidates for influenza and hemorrhagic fever 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.