

# VenatoRx Pharmaceuticals Names Joseph C. Larsen, Ph.D. Vice President, Strategic Portfolio Development

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MALVERN, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--VenatoRx Pharmaceuticals today announced that Joseph C. Larsen, Ph.D. has joined the Company as Vice President, Strategic Portfolio Development. With more than 20 years' experience, Dr. Larsen is globally recognized as a leader in the area of public health preparedness. At VenatoRx, Dr. Larsen will help translate VenatoRx's rich internal programs toward strategic public and private partnerships, and will help identify new growth opportunities for VenatoRx.

"Joe brings a unique breadth of experience to VenatoRx," said Christopher J. Burns, Ph.D., President and CEO at VenatoRx. "We look forward to working with him to achieve our mission and vision: significantly improving health outcomes for patients with difficult-to-treat infections."

Prior to joining VenatoRx, Dr. Larsen was Senior Vice President of Life Sciences at Strategic Marketing Innovations (SMI), a government relations and consulting firm. At SMI, Dr. Larsen represented clients in the antibacterial product, drug, and diagnostic sectors, providing technical support in product development and aiding companies in securing non-dilutive funding from the U.S. Government.

Prior to SMI, Dr. Larsen served as Director of the Division of CBRN Medical Countermeasures within the Biomedical Advanced Research Development Authority (BARDA). In that role, he oversaw a \$2.8B fund for the late-stage development and procurement of medical products for use during public health emergencies and a \$530M annual advanced research and development fund. Additionally, Dr. Larsen supported the development and regulatory approval for a novel smallpox antiviral drug, two novel antibiotics, and a cytokine therapy to treat the hematopoietic effects of acute radiation exposure. He also led the establishment of Project Bioshield programs to develop vaccine and therapeutics to safe guard the American public from future Ebola virus outbreaks. Dr. Larsen was the lead for BARDA's work on combating antibiotic resistant bacteria and was an executive member and founder of CARB-X, a novel \$450M public private partnership focused on promoting innovation in antibacterial drug development. Dr. Larsen has also been involved in discussing potential reforms to the economic incentive structures for antibacterial drug development.

Previously, Dr. Larsen served as Chief of the Broad Spectrum Antimicrobials program at BARDA. In that role, Dr. Larsen oversaw a portfolio of approximately \$1.2B in programs that supported the development of novel antibacterial and antiviral drugs. Dr. Larsen also served as the BARDA representative on the U.S. Transatlantic Task Force on

Antimicrobial Resistance, and as a Senior Science and Technology Manager at the Joint Science and Technology Office for Chemical and Biological Defense (JSTO-CBDP) within the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

Dr. Larsen was an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellow at the Department of Homeland Security. Additionally, he was a 2005 National Academy of Science Christine Mirzayan fellow with the Board of Life Sciences.

Dr. Larsen received his Ph.D. in Microbiology from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and his B.A. with honors from the University of Kansas.

### **About VenatoRx Pharmaceuticals, Inc.**

VenatoRx is a private pharmaceutical company that is focused on the discovery and development of novel anti-infectives to treat multi-drug-resistant bacterial infections and hard-to-treat viral infections. Founded in 2010, VenatoRx has built a world-class in-house R&D organization that has filed over 100 patents spanning multiple research programs. VenatoRx has received significant funding awards from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH); Wellcome Trust; the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service (HHS); the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA); and CARB-X, and as well as private equity investments from Versant Ventures, Abingworth and Foresite Capital.

The Company's most advanced development-stage product is VNRX-5133, an injectable beta-lactamase inhibitor (BLI) that features selective and potent in vitro activity against both serine- and metallo-beta-lactamases (MBLs), including ESBL, OXA, KPC, NDM, and VIM enzymes. VenatoRx believes that VNRX-5133, in a fixed combination with the fourth generation cephalosporin, cefepime, has the potential to provide a valuable broad-spectrum treatment option to meet unmet medical needs in patients with infections due to carbapenem-resistant pathogens including carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) and carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA), suspected polymicrobial infections caused by both gram-negative and gram-positive susceptible pathogens, and engineerable bioterror pathogens such as *Burkholderia* spp. VenatoRx initiated enrollment in its Phase 3 trial of cefepime/VNRX-5133 in patients with complicated urinary tract infections (cUTIs) in August 2019 and top-line results are expected by the end of 2020. This project has been funded in whole or in part with federal funds from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract No. HHSN272201300019C, The Wellcome Trust under Award No. 360G-Wellcome-101999/Z/13/Z, and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and

Response, Department of Health and Human Services under Contract No. HHSO100201900007C.

VenatoRx's second development-stage product in clinical development is VNRX-7145, an orally bioavailable BLI that in a fixed combination with the third generation orally bioavailable cephalosporin, ceftibuten, has the potential to rescue activity of the partner antibiotic against ESBLs and key carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, including those expressing KPC and OXA carbapenemases. This project has been funded in part with Federal funds from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract No. HHSN272201600029C.

Additionally, VenatoRx has a broad pipeline of preclinical programs including a novel class of Penicillin-Binding Protein (PBP) inhibitors that are impervious to beta-lactamase-driven resistance, and novel antiviral agents targeting Hepatitis B Virus. For more information, please visit [www.venatorx.com](http://www.venatorx.com).

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