



MarketWatch

Novira Therapeutics Announces Appointment of Roger J. Pomerantz, M.D., F.A.C.P., as Chair of Scientific Advisory Board

By

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DOYLESTOWN, Pa., Aug. 26, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Novira Therapeutics, Inc., a privately held biopharmaceutical company developing novel therapies for curative treatment of chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, today announced that Roger J. Pomerantz, M.D., F.A.C.P., was appointed the Chair of its Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). In this role he will also function as a Senior Advisor to the Company.

"We are thrilled to have Roger join our SAB as Chair," said Christian Schade, Chief Executive Officer at Novira. "Roger brings a wealth of pharma and biotech experience in drug development which will be invaluable to Novira as we continue to advance NVR-1221, our novel HBV core inhibitor program, currently in clinical development for chronic HBV infection."

Dr. Pomerantz added, "I very much look forward to working with the Novira team and members of the SAB as they continue to develop this very important compound. NVR-1221 leads a new class of antiviral agents that may offer a curative approach to patients with chronic HBV infection."

Dr. Pomerantz is President, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Seres Health and was Senior Vice President and Worldwide Head of Licensing & Acquisitions at Merck & Co., Inc. where he oversaw all licensing and acquisitions at Merck Research Laboratories. Previously, he served as Senior Vice President and Global Franchise Head of Infectious Diseases at Merck. Prior to joining Merck, Roger was Global Head of Infectious Diseases for Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals, responsible for all anti-infective agents worldwide. He joined Johnson & Johnson in 2005 as President of Tibotec Pharmaceuticals, Inc. He has been responsible for leading the development of 8 approved drugs for HIV, HCV and MDR-TB. Previously, Roger received his B.A. in Biochemistry at the Johns Hopkins University and his M.D. at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He completed his Internal Medicine internship and residency training, and his subspecialty clinical and research training in Infectious Diseases and Virology at the Massachusetts General Hospital (M.G.H.) of the Harvard Medical School and was selected and served as the Chief Medical Resident at M.G.H. His post-doctoral research training in Molecular Retrovirology was obtained at both the Harvard Medical School and the Whitehead Institute of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Roger was Professor of Medicine, Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology, Chief of Infectious Diseases, and the Founding Director and Chair of the Institute for Human Virology and Biodefense at the Thomas Jefferson University and Medical School.

About NVR-1221

NVR-1221 is a small molecule, direct-acting antiviral, for oral administration in patients with Chronic Hepatitis B (CHB) that inhibits the HBV core or capsid protein. HBV core is a novel and promising drug target with multiple activities required for viral replication and persistence. Inhibition of HBV core protein function by NVR-1221 offers the potential for a more efficient suppression of the virus leading to improved durable viral suppression and functional cure rates.

NVR-1221 is in Phase 1a clinical studies in New Zealand following successful completion of the Clinical Trial Application (CTA) regulatory process. The Phase 1a clinical study will investigate the dose-related safety/tolerance and pharmacokinetics (PK) of NVR-1221 in approximately 40 healthy volunteers. Upon completion and satisfactory outcome of the Phase 1a clinical study, Novira will commence a Phase 1b clinical study to test the safety, PK and initial antiviral activity of NVR-1221 in patients with chronic HBV infection.

About HBV

Hepatitis B infection presents a significant unmet medical need with an estimated 350 million people worldwide living with chronic HBV infection. A significant number of patients with chronic infection incur a higher risk of developing cirrhosis and cancer. It is estimated that 60% of hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer) is a direct consequence of HBV infection. Current drugs approved for the management of CHB include PEG-Interferon and nucleot(s)ides which can effectively suppress virus replication, but rarely lead to functional cures.

About Novira Therapeutics

Novira Therapeutics, Inc., is a privately held biopharmaceutical company focused on discovery and development of first-in-class antiviral drugs for the treatment of chronic HBV infection (CHB), a global disease with a high level of unmet medical need. The company is employing innovative chemistry and biology technologies to discover small molecule inhibitors of the HBV core or capsid protein as well as other drugs with novel mode of action. The company's novel antivirals will offer the potential to address the limitations of current CHB therapies when used either as mono-therapy or in combination with existing standards of care.

For more information, visit www.noviratherapeutics.com.

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