**NEWS RELEASE** **For immediate release**

## AmorChem invests in the development of a therapeutic to treat myotonic dystrophy.

**Montreal, September 19, 2013** – Following the announcement made on September 17 by the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie du Québec, AmorChem is delighted to announce the closing of a new transaction with Univalor. This undertaking is based on the work of the Dr. Pascal Chartrand (Department of Biochemistry, Université de Montréal) and concerns the development of a therapeutic for treating the symptoms of myotonic dystrophy (Type I).

"We are very enthusiastic about supporting Dr. Chartrand and his team's promising work. Type 1 myotonic dystrophy is an orphan disease whose prevalence is particularly important in Quebec," explains Inès Holzbaur, General Partner of AmorChem. "The results of our project with Dr. Chartrand will bring to the fore a new therapeutic approach for dealing with the symptoms that afflict so many patients."

"Univalor is very pleased to formalize this agreement. This financial support is essential and opens the way for Dr. Chartrand to develop a treatment capable of improving the daily life of people living with this neuromuscular disease. His expertise and research on the transport and localization of RNA (ribonucleic acid), well recognized by the scientific community, now bears fruit in the form of this first therapeutic application towards conquering myotonic dystrophy" says Laurence Rulleau, Vice-President of Business Development at Univalor."

Also known under the name of "Steinert's disease", myotonic dystrophy (Type 1) is a hereditary disease of which the prevalence in the world is of the order of 1: 10 000. On the other hand, here in Quebec, and particularly in the region of Charlevoix/Saguenay Lake St-Jean, this rises to as high as 1: 600. Generally aged 20 to 30 years, the patients affected by this disease develop (among other) a range of muscular, ophthalmological and cardiovascular symptoms. These symptoms worsen with advancing years and in most cases lead to severe disability in patients. There is currently no treatment for this disease.

"This rare disease is caused by the expression of a mutant form of RNA that accumulates in the nucleus of cells and exerts a toxic effect by sequestration of key RNA-binding proteins. Upon reducing the accumulation of this mutant RNA, our compounds restore the normal activity of these proteins" explains Dr. Chartrand.

The work financed by AmorChem will principally be carried out at the University of Montreal and in collaboration with NuChem Therapeutics.

"The pharmaceutical companies are very interested in orphan diseases and are constantly looking for innovative therapeutic approaches in their treatment. We believe that the progress that will be accomplished in the framework of this project will address those priorities," says Elizabeth Douville, General Partner at AmorChem.

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**ABOUT AMORCHEM L.P.**

AmorChem L.P. (www.amorchem.com) is a venture capital fund located in Montreal focused on investing in promising life science projects originating from Quebec-based universities and research centres. The principal limited partners of this fund are Investissement-Québec, FIER Partenaires, Fonds de solidarité FTQ and Merck & Co. This fund is the latest addition to the GeneChem portfolio of funds, a fund manager in existence since 1997. AmorChem's innovative business model involves financing research-stage projects to enable them to reach pre-clinical proof-of-concept ("POC") in a semi-virtual mode within 18-24 months. The fund seeks to generate returns through a two-pronged exit strategy: sell projects having reached POC to large biotechnology or pharmaceutical companies; or bundle them into new spin-out companies. AmorChem using external resources will manage the projects. To that effect, AmorChem has established a strategic partnership with the Biotechnology Research Institute in order to access its R&D platforms. In addition, to enabling projects requiring small molecules as tools or drug leads, AmorChem has founded NuChem Therapeutics Inc., a medicinal chemistry contract-research company.

**ABOUT UNIVALOR**

Univalor, founded in 2001, is a limited partnership that offers to the industry the opportunity to increase their competitive advantage through access to leading edge scientific and engineering technologies developed by world class researchers from the Université de Montréal, its affiliated schools and most of its affiliated hospitals. The work of Univalor's specialists is to showcase some of the most promising technologies developed by those researchers to potential partners looking for innovation in the areas of life sciences and human health, pure and applied sciences, engineering, information technology and management sciences. Please visit www.univalor.ca for more information.

**ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL**

The 64,000 students and professors associated with Université de Montréal and its affiliated schools for commerce (HEC Montréal) and engineering (École Polytechnique) are recognized for the high volume and quality of their research and for their international profile. Ten per cent of the university's students are from outside Canada, and 40% of research published by the university's community involves international collaboration. Within Canada, Université de Montréal's excellence is recognized by the awarding of half a billion dollars in funding; at an international level, it is consistently placed within the top 150 institutions in major world research rankings. www.umontreal.ca

**ABOUT NUCHEM THERAPEUTICS INC.**

NuChem Therapeutics Inc. (www.nuchemtherapeutics.com) is a medicinal chemistry contract-research company wholly-owned by AmorChem. With laboratories situated at the Biotechnology Research Institute in Montreal, the company is led by Dr. Daniel Guay, formerly of Merck Canada and the Institut de recherche en immunologie et cancérologie (IRIC).

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