



NEWS RELEASE - For immediate release

AMORCHEM SPINS OUT ITS USP15-DEUBIQUITINYLATION (DUB) DRUG DISCOVERY PLATFORM INTO CORBIN THERAPEUTICS, WITH A FIRST 1M\$ SEED INVESTMENT.

Montreal, Quebec – January 9, 2017 – AmorChem is pleased to announce the creation of Corbin Therapeutics, its third spin-off company focusing on a novel therapeutic approach to treat various inflammation-based diseases via inhibition of the ubiquitin carboxyl-terminal hydrolase 15 (USP15) enzyme. All rights to the USP15 technology initially held by AmorChem have been transferred to Corbin Therapeutics, with a first seed investment of 1M\$CAD. This capital will allow Corbin to screen various compound libraries in order to identify lead candidates which efficiently inhibit the USP15 enzyme, and eventually develop them as therapies for multiple sclerosis (MS).

The USP15 technology has been developed in the laboratory of Dr Philippe Gros, who showed the central role of USP15 in inflammation. He discovered that USP15 regulates type I interferon response and is part of the pathogenesis of neuroinflammation, as recently published in *Nature Immunology* (2017) 18:54–63. A single point mutation of USP15, leading to its partial loss of function, was shown to be protective in both experimental cerebral malaria (a microbial model of neuroinflammation leading to acute fatal encephalitis) and experimental autoimmune encephalomyelitis (a non-microbial model of neuroinflammation and multiple sclerosis). “The results obtained in these animal models clearly suggest that UPS15 and its downstream effectors are interesting drug targets, inhibition of which might be the key to preventing and treating multiple sclerosis” explains Dr Elizabeth Douville, Managing Partner at AmorChem. “As our research program enters this next important phase of drug discovery and development, the spin off into a biotech company is appropriate”, she adds.

“Corbin Therapeutics is the perfect example of a university asset which can be turned into a drug discovery platform company around well-defined therapeutic targets. Several drug screening tools have been developed and validated for efficient drug selection” adds Dr. Inès Holzbaur, Managing Partner at AmorChem.

CORBIN’S MANAGEMENT TEAM

Upon creation of Corbin Therapeutics, AmorChem appointed Maxime Ranger, Ph.D., MBA, as Chief Executive Officer. As a serial entrepreneur, Dr. Ranger will establish collaborations with pharmaceutical industry and research centers, in order to identify USP15 lead inhibitors as potential drugs against neuroinflammation and multiple sclerosis. As scientific advisor for the company, Dr Gros will continue his research on USP15 and identify other proteins triggering inflammation synergistically with USP15, in addition to pursuing the development of novel USP15-based drug discovery tools.

WORLDWIDE, EXCLUSIVE LICENSE SIGNED BETWEEN CORBIN AND MCGILL

Corbin signed an exclusive, worldwide, license with McGill University on a USP15-based drug discovery platform in order to screen compound libraries and identify the first USP15 inhibitor as a drug candidate for the treatment of MS or other inflammation-based diseases. “Corbin Therapeutics is seen as a great achievement after many years of intense and high quality research conducted by Dr Philippe Gros.” notes Dr. Rose Goldstein, Vice-Principal, Research and International Relations, McGill University.

“USP15 target opens a promising therapeutic track towards therapies for 2.5 million MS patients worldwide, where Canada features one of highest MS rates with a total of 100,000 affected patients” says Maxime Ranger, CEO Corbin Therapeutics.

ABOUT CORBIN THERAPEUTICS INC

Corbin Therapeutics is a Montreal-based biotech company, using a unique drug discovery platform to identify and develop novel USP15 inhibitors for treatment of various inflammation diseases, such as multiple sclerosis. This platform includes several in-vitro and in-vivo models for efficient drug screening and confirmation of potential lead candidates.

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 24 to 36 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 MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Founded in Montreal, Quebec, in 1821, McGill (www.mcgill.ca) is a leading Canadian post-secondary institution. It has two campuses, 10 faculties, 300 programs of study and some 40,000 students, including more than 9,400 graduate students. McGill attracts students from nearly 150 countries around the world, its 10,900 international students making up 27 per cent of the student body.

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