



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

AmorChem invests in a mucoadhesive nanoparticle drug delivery platform

Montreal,— AmorChem is pleased to announce the closing of a first transaction with the University of Waterloo. The project focuses on the use of a platform technology derived from the work of Dr. Frank Gu, Canada Research Chair in Nanotechnology Engineering, and Associate Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Waterloo. This mucoadhesive nanotechnology platform facilitates a directed and more efficacious delivery of drugs.

“AmorChem will join forces with Dr. Gu in order to pursue the preclinical development of a first product delivered using this mucoadhesive nanoparticle technology. The choice of dry eye as an indication was driven by data which convinced us that delivering drug using these nanoparticles offers advantages which could improve the treatment of this disease,” explains Inès Holzbour, general partner at AmorChem.

The nanoparticles bind to mucous membranes, allowing for targeted delivery of the treatment payload over a prolonged period of time. The size of the particles, combined with their mucoadhesive properties, make it possible to deliver large payloads that are released in a controlled manner while resisting the ocular clearance which typically occurs by drainage and tearing. It is expected that this will offer a treatment that is less toxic and allows for better compliance. Cyclosporin A, a drug known to be useful in the treatment of dry eye, will be the first molecule to be tested using this delivery system. Although this particular project is focused on an ophthalmic indication, the platform is also suited to nasal, pulmonary and gastro-intestinal delivery.

“Supported by commercialization leadership from the Waterloo Commercialisation Office, this is a strong validation of Dr. Gu’s translational research impact and the strength of nanotechnology engineering in general at the University of Waterloo. We believe AmorChem’s investment, under its flexible and supportive business model, will pave the way to successful commercialization of this transformative technology,” says D. Georges Dixon, vice-president, research, University of Waterloo.

“Although AmorChem focuses on investments in the province of Quebec, this collaboration with an Ontarian institution shows that the AmorChem model is adaptable to other regions, and that there is demand for our kind of translational investing outside Quebec. We believe that out-of-province opportunities could play an interesting role in the future activities of AmorChem. For example, investments in platforms such as Dr. Gu’s may allow us to start-up companies in collaboration with Quebec-based venture capital funds,” concludes 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 primarily 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.

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