Press Release

Psynova Neurotech and Rules Based Medicine to co-develop a blood test for the diagnosis of schizophrenia

Cambridge, UK and Austin, TX (June 11 2008): Psynova Neurotech, a UK based company developing novel biomarkers to aid the diagnosis and treatment of neuropsychiatric illnesses, announced today it is partnering with Rules-Based Medicine, Inc. (RBM), the leading multiplexed biomarker testing laboratory, to co-develop and commercialise a blood test for the diagnosis of schizophrenia.

The current diagnosis of schizophrenia is highly subjective and time-consuming, due to the lack of objective biological tests specific for the disease. The resulting delay and uncertainty in diagnosis leads to delayed treatment, and, in turn, extended suffering and hardship for patients and their families. In the few studies where early treatment has been implemented in high risk patient groups, poor outcomes were substantially reduced, as were the duration of untreated illness, inpatient days, and the time to remission. Therefore, a test that provides earlier and more accurate diagnosis of the disease would deliver not only improved patient outcomes but also greatly reduce the overall costs of schizophrenia to health services and society.[1]

Psynova Neurotech and RBM will focus on the unmet clinical need for an objective and reliable diagnostic aid to accelerate and optimise the treatment of schizophrenia. Under the terms of the co-development agreement, the parties will collaborate in the validation, regulatory approval and manufacture of a diagnostic blood test for schizophrenia that will be available worldwide. The agreement will incorporate the candidate biomarkers already identified by Psynova Neurotech and make use of RBM's comprehensive protein biomarker assay and technology platform to accelerate the delivery of an objective diagnostic blood test for the benefit of schizophrenic patients. Psynova's biomarkers were discovered through its collaborative research programme with co-founder Dr. Sabine Bahn of the Cambridge Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research (CCNR) at the Institute of Biotechnology, Cambridge University.

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[1] [1]*Norman, R.M.G., Malla, A.K.*, (2001). Duration of untreated psychosis: a critical examination of the concept and its importance. **Psychol. Med**.31, 381– 400; *McGorry, P.D.*, (2002). The recognition and optimal management of early psychosis: An evidence-based reforum. **World Psychiatry** 1 (2), 76– 83; *Harrigan, S.M., McGorry, P.D., Krstev, H.*, (2003). Does treatment delay in first-episode psychosis really matter? **Psychol. Med**. 33 (1), 97– 110; *Riecher-Rossler, A., Aston, J., Borgwardt, S., Gschwandtner, U., Pfluger M.*, (2006). Early detection and treatment of schizophrenia—how early? **Acta Psychiatr. Scand Suppl**. 429, 73-80.

"This is a very exciting and important partnership for Psynova," said Dr. Sabine Bahn, director and co-founder of Psynova Neurotech. "RBM's technology platform and clinical screening expertise give us a rapid path to bring the candidate biomarkers identified through our research efforts to the benefit of patients. The tests will be a tool to help general practitioners and psychiatrists in the difficult task of diagnosing and treating patients much sooner, ideally when symptoms are still mild. The Psynova biomarkers not only have the potential to help in the identification of disease subtypes, but also in deciding the best treatment options, monitoring patient responses and facilitating novel approaches to drug discovery."

"Complex diseases like schizophrenia are an ideal fit for RBM's multiplex testing approach," said RBM CEO T. Craig Benson. "By combining RBM's expertise in assay development and testing services with Psynova Neurotech's proprietary biomarkers, we can improve the standard of care for schizophrenia, ultimately providing significant savings to health care systems worldwide. We anticipate that this is the first of many collaborations between the two companies, further leveraging other discoveries made by Psynova and the Cambridge Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research."

The Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks - Europe (GAMIAN- Europe), a pan-European patient-driven federation of national organizations assisting people affected by mental illness, also welcomed the announcement.

"Any diagnostic tool that aids in the early identification of schizophrenia and other chronic mental illnesses will help people begin treatment earlier to avoid much of the pain, hardship and deterioration caused by these devastating diseases," said Dolores Gauci, president of GAMIAN - Europe. "Further, such a test could help affected individuals and their carers maintain a better quality of life."

More about Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a complex, seriously debilitating psychiatric disorder affecting approximately 1% of the population but accounting for a quarter of all mental health costs and taking up to one third of psychiatric hospital bed occupancy.[2] The overall cost of schizophrenia to society is huge. Direct costs alone, such as general practitioner and specialist consultation, community psychiatric nursing visits, hospital admissions and drug treatment, are estimated to total €33billion p.a. in Europe.[3] Indirect costs, which are dominated by lost productivity through incapacity, unemployment and premature mortality are harder to quantify but are thought to make up at least 50% of the total cost of the disease.

About Psynova Neurotech Ltd.

[2] *Wyatt RJ, Henter I, Leary MC, Taylor E*.(1995)An economic evaluation of schizophrenia--1991. **Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol.** 30, 196-205.

[3] Knapp *M, Chisholm D, Leese M, Amaddeo F, Tansella M, et al.* (2002) Comparing patterns and costs of schizophrenia care in five European countries: the EPSILON study. European Psychiatric Services: Inputs Linked to Outcome Domains and Needs. **Acta Psychiatr Scand** 105, 42-54 and *Andlin-Sobocki P, Rossler W* (2005) Cost of psychotic disorders in Europe. **Eur J Neurol** 12, Suppl 1: 74-77.

Psynova Neurotech was established in 2005 by Dr Sabine Bahn, MD, PhD, MRCPsych, and Prof Chris Lowe, PhD of the University of Cambridge and funded since inception by Porton Capital, for the commercial development and exploitation of novel biomarkers for neuropsychiatric illnesses. Building on 12 years of ground-breaking research by Dr Bahn, Psynova Neurotech has close links with Bahn's laboratory within the newly established Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research (CCNR) at the University of Cambridge. Although initial efforts have focussed on schizophrenia, Psynova Neurotech intends to expand into other related therapeutic areas, such as bipolar affective disorder (also referred to as manic depression) and major depression, where it has extensive relevant expertise. At present, there are no validated biomarkers and diagnostic tests for any of these disorders. More information about Psynova Neurotech can be found at www.psynova.com

About Rules-Based Medicine

Rules-Based Medicine (RBM) provides comprehensive protein biomarker products and services centered on its Multi-Analyte Profiling (MAP) technology. Its service platform (RodentMAP® and HumanMAP®) provides pre-clinical and clinical researchers with reproducible, quantitative, multiplexed immunoassay data for hundreds of proteins cost-effectively in multiple species, and from a small sample volume. The Company also offers innovative and proprietary *ex vivo* testing systems such as TruCulture™, the first fully-closed, reproducible whole blood culture system. RBM is actively developing multiplex diagnostic tests to detect the presence of complex diseases and conditions in areas of unmet medical need such as neuropsychiatry, nephrology, immunology and cardiology. More information about RBM is located at www.rbmmaps.com.

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