



SOUTHAMPTON, UK
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KARUS SCIENTIST PRESENTS AT KEY INDUSTRY CONFERENCES

Innovative pharmaceutical company Karus Therapeutics make presentations at two key industry conferences: the CHI 'Discovery on Target' conference (Boston, MA) and the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) conference (San Francisco, CA). In both presentations Professor Graham Packham, one of Karus's founders, highlighted the progress made with Karus's synthetic depsipeptide analogues and, in particular, presented *in-vivo* data showing the dramatic improvements that Karus has recently made to the potency, safety and drug-like properties of these compounds.

Karus's synthetic depsipeptides are thought to be the most potent histone deacetylase (HDAC) inhibitors known. They have a high selectivity for the Class-1 enzymes: HDAC1, HDAC2 and HDAC3, and have a distinctively prolonged pharmacodynamic effect. Karus believes that these compounds have best-in-class potential in the treatment of cancer and inflammatory disease. There is intense pharmaceutical industry interest in HDAC inhibitors, which can slow abnormal tumor-cell growth, cause controlled cell death and correct abnormal cell differentiation. Karus's next generation products are expected to offer patients a potent and safer treatment than their predecessors.

Karus has two development programs, one in cancer and one in psoriasis, both of which are expected to enter the clinic in 2009. In addition, the company has initiated programs in other disease areas, including rheumatoid arthritis.

"We have made impressive progress towards our goal of creating best-in-class medicines for the treatment of cancer and inflammation. Our synthetic depsipeptides are providing us with excellent *in-vitro* and *in-vivo* data, strongly supporting our belief in this family of compounds" said Dr Simon Kerry, Chief Executive of Karus Therapeutics, "we appreciate the opportunity to present our recent data at these two important conferences".

The University of Southampton spin-out was created in July 2005 by Dr Ganesan (Reader in School of Chemistry), Professor Graham Packham (Head of Molecular Mechanisms Group, Cancer Research UK) and cardiac biologist Dr Paul Townsend (Head of the British Heart Foundation Apoptosis and Gene Regulation Group) from the School of Medicine.

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