



SOUTHAMPTON, UK
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KARUS THERAPEUTICS SECURES FURTHER FINANCING

Innovative pharmaceutical company Karus Therapeutics Ltd has today announced the closing of a £0.7M financing. Investors include IP Venture Fund, Esperante, Drummond Paris and a number of existing and new Business Angels. The investment will be used to advance the development of Karus's KAR2581 HDAC inhibitor and first-in-class drugs that selectively and potently target HDAC-6 (KAR3000) and PI3-Kinase p110 β /p110 δ (KAR4000). The company is focused on the development of these drugs to treat inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis (RA), psoriasis and organ transplant rejection. With this investment, Karus will confirm the clinical candidates in its KAR2581, 3000 & 4000 programs and substantiate their potential as breakthrough treatments for chronic inflammatory diseases.

Karus's KAR2581 is an innovative, highly potent and well tolerated HDAC inhibitor that shows superiority to the TNF α inhibitor, Enbrel[®], in rodent models of arthritis at very low and infrequent doses. KAR2581 has blockbuster potential as a small-molecule competitor of the anti-TNF α biologics in the treatment of RA.

There is intense pharmaceutical industry interest in HDAC-6 inhibitors, which are known to up-regulate FOXP3, the master regulator of Treg cell function. Karus's KAR3000 series HDAC-6 inhibitors are expected to offer patients a potent and safe treatment for chronic inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis.

PI3-Kinase (PI3K) has emerged as an important therapeutic target in inflammatory disease and cancer. There is growing evidence that inhibiting p110 β has potential in the treatment of inflammation, whilst p110 δ plays a key role in the recruitment and function of immune and inflammatory cells. By simultaneously targeting p110 β and p110 δ , Karus expects to deliver a potent and safe drug for the treatment of inflammatory diseases.

"We are delighted to have secured the support of Karus's investors at this key stage of the company's development" said Dr Simon Kerry, Chief Executive of Karus Therapeutics. Stephen Shuttleworth, Karus's CSO added, "the data we have generated to date strongly supports the therapeutic potential of these programs and this new injection of cash will be used to complete key efficacy and toxicology studies over the coming months".

Karus was formed in July 2005 to develop a new family of highly potent, optimized HDAC inhibitors that were identified at the University of Southampton and CR- UK as part of collaborative research conducted between Professor Graham Packham, Dr Ganesan and Dr Paul Townsend.

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