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Diamyd expands its Scientific Advisory Board

Diamyd Medical recently acquired exclusive rights relating to the therapeutic use of GABA for the treatment of diabetes and other inflammation-related conditions. The Company is now expanding its Scientific and Medical Advisory Board with three internationally leading experts on GABA and diabetes: Dr. Bryndis Birnir, Dr. Brooke Ligon, and Dr. Qinghua Wang.

Diamyd Medical has for a long time attracted some of the world's most renowned experts in diabetes and immunology to its Scientific and Medical Advisory Board. The advisory board is an important source of information for the Company, which regularly consults with individual members concerning medical and scientific questions that arise in Diamyd's activities. In addition, the members serve as Diamyd's ambassadors towards researchers in academia and industry.

The Company recently concluded an exclusive licensing agreement with the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) relating to a patent portfolio for the therapeutic use of GABA and GABA receptor agonists for the treatment and prevention of type 1 and type 2 diabetes as well as other inflammation-related conditions like metabolic syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis and allergy. Diamyd is therefore including an additional three leading scientists in the advisory board whose research is focused on GABA and diabetes: Dr. Bryndis Birnir, Dr. Brooke Ligon, and Dr. Qinghua Wang.

Bryndis Birnir is Professor of Physiology within the Medical Faculty at Uppsala University. Dr. Birnir's research is focused on GABA signaling where she and her colleagues study the interplay between the extracellular signal molecule GABA and the high-affinity GABA-A receptors that are ion channels. In particular they focus on how these molecules affect secretion of metabolic hormones, cellular excitability and immune modulation. These processes are of vital importance for many metabolic and inflammatory diseases like diabetes.

"After many years of research I am convinced that GABA will come to play a significant role in the fight against diabetes and I am very pleased if I can help Diamyd taking the right steps towards the goal of curing the disease," says Dr. Birnir.

Brooke Ligon received her medical degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in the United States. She trained as a Neurologist at Tufts Medical Center in Boston and also completed her Ph.D. in Neuroscience there. Dr. Ligon has dedicated her research career to demonstrating the critical role GABA plays in maintaining glucose homeostasis. Her innovative basic and clinical science has revealed that restoring GABA is crucial, in the setting of diabetes, to regenerate beta cells, eliminate the immune pathology and restore long-term health.

"I am pleased to join the accomplished Diamyd team in working to reverse metabolic and inflammatory diseases. It is my belief that the next few years will be exciting for science and rewarding for patients and their families," says Dr. Ligon.

Qinghua Wang, M.D., Ph.D., is Associate Professor, at the Department of Physiology and Medicine at Toronto University in Canada. Dr Wang currently serves as scientist at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. He is also Lecturing Professor at Fudan University in China. Wang and colleagues were first to demonstrate that GABA has dual actions: beta cell replication and anti-inflammation, and showed that GABA treatment prevented and partially reversed type 1 diabetes in mice. Efforts are under way to investigate whether GABA is effective in treating type 1 diabetes in humans.

"As we are gathering experience with our ongoing GABA Phase I clinical trial in China, I hope the outcome may facilitate Diamyd's efforts in developing a new therapy for patients with diabetes," says Dr. Wang.

“There is an urgent need to develop new safe treatments to suppress the immune responses that contribute to the development of type 1 and type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and metabolic syndrome. Diamyd is leading the development of new therapeutic strategies that may safely help treat these disorders,” says Dr. Daniel Kaufman at UCLA, who is a longtime advisor to Diamyd and inventor of the GABA technology.

“While disappointed that earlier efforts with the GAD-based diabetes vaccine Diamyd® did not meet expected endpoints, I believe, with the benefit of hindsight, some of the reasons for this can now be explained and be adjusted for in future efforts. With this, I am more optimistic than ever that we can, through a combination of targeting GAD and GABA, make a meaningful impact on both the prevention of type 1 diabetes as well as improving the lives of those diagnosed with the disease,” says Dr. Mark Atkinson at University of Florida, who is a longtime advisor to Diamyd and one of the five most cited authors in diabetes research and also active in the GABA field of research.

Other members of Diamyd’s Scientific and Medical Advisory Board are Hans Wigzell, Professor Emeritus of Immunology and previously President of Karolinska Institutet; Lars Klareskog, Professor of Rheumatology at Karolinska Institutet; Bart Roep, Professor of Medicine at Leiden University Medical Center; David Leslie, Professor of Diabetes and Autoimmunity at the Royal London and St. Bartholomew's School of Medicine, University of London; Allan Tobin, Professor Emeritus and Senior Scientific Advisor to the CHDI Foundation; and Åke Lernmark, Professor of Experimental Diabetes at Lund University.

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About Diamyd Medical

Diamyd Medical is a Swedish diabetes company. The Company was formerly called Diamyd Therapeutics and was spun off from Mertiva AB (formerly Diamyd Medical AB) in April 2013. The Company’s primary development project consists of the GAD-based diabetes vaccine Diamyd® for the treatment and prevention of autoimmune diabetes. Two Swedish researcher-initiated Phase II studies with Diamyd® are ongoing. One study evaluates whether the diabetes vaccine can prevent type 1 diabetes in children who are at high risk of developing the disease, while the other study evaluates whether Diamyd® in combination with relatively high doses of vitamin D and ibuprofen can preserve the body’s own ability to regulate the blood sugar level in children and adolescents newly diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

Diamyd Medical also has holdings in the gene therapy company Periphagen Holdings, Inc. (US).

Diamyd Medical’s Series B share has been traded on NASDAQ OMX First North since May 20, 2013 under the ticker DMYD B. Remium Nordic AB is the Company’s Certified Adviser. Further information is available on the Company’s website: www.diamyd.com.

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