

## **Exiqon licenses validated biomarkers for prostate cancer from Aarhus University Hospital.**

Exiqon A/S (NASDAQ OMX Copenhagen: "EXQ") today announced that the company has exclusively licensed prostate cancer biomarkers discovered and validated by Aarhus University Hospital, Department of Molecular Medicine (MOMA).

The prostate cancer biomarkers in-licensed consist of gene specific methylation patterns which are associated with the aggressiveness of prostate cancer. The prognostic potential of the epigenetic biomarkers has been validated in two independent European cohorts with 293 and 114 patients, respectively, with a follow-up of 10 years after diagnosis and Radical Prostatectomy in malignant cases. The prostate cancer biomarkers have also demonstrated diagnostic potential in the discrimination of localized prostate cancer from benign tumors with sensitivities of up to 93% at a fixed specificity of 97%.

*"MOMA has for a considerable number of years worked intensively on the identification of molecular biomarkers in several different cancers including prostate cancer", says Professor and MD Torben Ørntoft and continues "We rarely come across biomarkers with such a promising potential as we have seen for these prostate cancer biomarkers which hold promise that better tests may be developed than what is available today".*

More than 50% of the male population above the age of 50 years is affected by prostate cancer, and only a fraction of these have aggressive prostate cancer that requires treatment. Indolent prostate cancer is a slowly developing disease, which means that many patients may die with the disease, not from the disease. Differentiating aggressive prostate cancer that requires treatment from indolent prostate cancer represents a large unmet need.

Current procedures for the identification of individuals with prostate cancer largely depend on the blood based prostate specific antigen (PSA) test, however, this test results in up to 70% false positives. A positive PSA test is followed up with trans-rectal biopsy which results in up to 30% false negatives, and prognosis is problematic because many tumors are also incorrectly staged. Nevertheless, clinical staging forms the basis for deciding whether to perform Radical Prostatectomy; an operation with considerable consequences for the life quality of patients.

*"This is a great opportunity for Exiqon. We cut several years off our current diagnostic programs for prostate cancer by gaining access to these validated biomarkers because prostate cancer develops slowly and the assessment of biomarker prognostic value requires follow up for 10 years or more" says CEO Lars Kongsbak.*

Exiqon and MOMA work together to develop a test that can help improve the treatment of prostate cancer patients. Together Exiqon and MOMA have several ongoing diagnostic collaborations including a recent grant of DKK 23 million from the Advanced Technology Foundation (now Innovation Foundation). This grant finances the identification and validation of biomarkers including miRNA in urine for diagnosis of prostate cancer as well as prognostic biomarkers for identification of aggressive cancer, and may benefit from the addition of the prostate cancer biomarkers now licensed by Exiqon.

### **Additional information**

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### **About Exiqon**

Exiqon operates in two business areas: Exiqon Life Sciences, a leading provider of flexible solutions for RNA analysis. Exiqon's research products are used by academia, biotech and pharmaceutical companies around the world to make groundbreaking discoveries about the correlation between gene activity and the development of cancer and other diseases. Exiqon Diagnostics collaborates with pharmaceutical and diagnostic companies to develop novel molecular diagnostic tests for early detection of diseases which can help physicians make treatment decisions based on the tools developed by Exiqon Life Sciences. Exiqon is listed on the NASDAQ in Copenhagen. For more information about us, please visit [www.exiqon.com](http://www.exiqon.com)