

Announcement no. 18/2007

To OMX The Nordic Exchange, Copenhagen, and the press

Vedbæk, October 16, 2007

EXIQON SIGNS A COOPERATIVE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT FOR CANCER DIAGNOSTICS WITH THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

Summary: Exiqon to help identify miRNA expression signatures associated with the onset and progression of colon cancer

Exiqon A/S, a leading supplier of high-value gene expression analysis products has penned a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to develop microRNA-based diagnostics for colon cancer.

Specifically, the alliance calls for the partners to identify miRNA expression signatures associated with the onset and progression of colon cancer, and to develop diagnostic tools for identifying patients so that they can receive the appropriate clinical course of treatment.

"This collaboration is an important step in the development of cancer diagnostics using microRNAs," said Lars Kongsbak, president and CEO of Exiqon. "This agreement with the NCI will enable us to further develop our unique LNA technology to support major advances in cancer diagnostics and research."

Scientists at Exiqon will work with the Genetics Branch, Center for Cancer Research at NCI through the duration of the study. The agreement does not change Exiqon's financial outlook for 2007.

About Colon Cancer

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer related death in the U.S, and the standard screening methods such as colonoscopy and the fecal occult blood test, suffer from significant disadvantages. Furthermore, the standard of care for colon cancer includes surgery and adjuvant chemotherapy, but not all patients benefit from this treatment. There is today no effective test that can help patients and their doctors decide whether or not to use chemotherapy after surgery as well as which chemotherapy to use.

About microRNAs and LNA™

microRNAs (miRNAs) are a novel class of regulatory RNA molecules with surprisingly widespread effects on gene regulation. Although recently identified as a class of molecules, initial studies indicate that miRNAs may regulate as much as 1/3 of all genes in the genome, thus comprising an up till now hidden level of regulation. Interestingly, miRNAs have already been found to play important roles in several types of cancers and in processes involved in cellular differentiation. In the cell, miRNAs are found in form of single-stranded RNA molecules, which are typically 20-25 nucleotides long in their active form.

LNAs are a class of nucleotide analogues that bind very strongly to RNA and DNA targets. By including LNAs in detection probes, it is possible to design very specific high-affinity detection assays for small RNA targets like miRNAs, which otherwise is not possible using standard DNA-based detection probes.

About NIH/NCI

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, coordinates the Nation's research program on cancer prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and control.

NCI was established by Congress in 1937, and its programs were intensified in 1971 after passage of new legislation called the National Cancer Act. As a result of the 1971 legislation, the NCI has built a network that includes regional and community cancer centers, physicians who are cancer specialists, cooperative groups of clinical researchers, and volunteer and community outreach groups. NCI also has initiated cancer control programs to hasten the application of knowledge gained through cancer research.

In Fiscal Year 2007, the NCI budget was \$4.9 billion, most of which was used to fund grants and contracts to universities, medical schools, cancer centers, research laboratories, and private firms in the United States and about 60 other countries around the world. The balance of the funds supported research activities conducted at the National Cancer Institute.

About Exiqon

Exiqon is a leading provider of high-value gene expression analysis products for the life sciences, research and drug discovery industries. Exiqon's rapidly growing product offerings integrate innovative chemistries with web-based software tools to help scientists achieve rapid and reliable results. Exiqon markets its products directly on www.exiqon.com or through distributors in the EU and Asia, as well as through its new, dedicated US sales force. Exiqon is located in the Medicin Valley area of Copenhagen, Denmark and in Boston, USA. Please visit our web-site at www.exiqon.com.

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