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Algernon Pharmaceuticals Appoints Dr. Peter Dicipinigaitis to Chronic Cough Advisory Board

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Jan. 11, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Algernon Pharmaceuticals Inc. (the “Company” or “AGN Pharma”) (CSE: AGN) (FRANKFURT: AGW0) (OTCQB: AGNPF), a Canadian clinical stage pharmaceutical development company, is pleased to announce that it has appointed Dr. Peter Dicipinigaitis MD, Professor of Medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, in New York, as a medical consultant to the Company’s chronic cough research program. Dr. Dicipinigaitis will be advising the Company on its planned 180 patient, Phase 2b chronic cough study of NP-120 (Ifenprodil).

Dr. Dicipinigaitis is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Diseases and Critical Care Medicine. He is a faculty member of the Division of Critical Care Medicine at Montefiore Medical Center and is the founder and director of the Montefiore Cough Center, one of the few specialty centers in the world exclusively committed to the evaluation and management of patients with chronic cough.

He received his undergraduate education at New York University (NYU) where he graduated summa cum laude with a degree in biochemistry. He obtained his medical degree from the NYU School of Medicine and remained at NYU-Bellevue for internal medicine residency training. He completed a fellowship in pulmonary & critical care medicine at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, immediately after which he came to Einstein/Montefiore.

In addition to experience in all aspects of clinical medicine within the spectrum of pulmonary and critical care, a major focus of Dr. Dicipinigaitis' clinical research for over 25 years has been in the area of cough. He has authored numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters on cough and is considered an authority on the performance of cough challenge studies in clinical research. He served as a co-author on cough management guidelines published by the American College of Chest Physicians as well as the European Respiratory Society and is the founder and chairman of the biannual American Cough Conference. Dr. Dicipinigaitis also serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the journal LUNG.

“We are very pleased that Dr. Dicipinigaitis has joined Algernon as a medical advisor,” said Christopher J. Moreau, CEO of Algernon Pharmaceuticals. “We look forward to working with him as we advance towards our upcoming Phase 2b chronic cough study of NP-120 (Ifenprodil).”

Chronic Cough Market

According to Data Bridge Market Research analyses, the global chronic cough market was valued at USD \$6.15 billion in 2021, and it will grow up to USD \$11.38 billion by 2029.

Merck & Co. obtained the rights to Gefapixant, a P2X3 receptor antagonist, as the lead

asset in the acquisition of Afferent Pharmaceuticals in 2016. At the time, Gefapixant had interim data from a Phase 2b dose-escalation study in refractory chronic cough. The deal was worth up to USD \$1.25B.

Bellus Health which is advancing its own novel P2X3 receptor antagonist, BLU 5937, has a market cap of over USD \$1.4B.

About Chronic Cough

Chronic cough is defined as a cough lasting for more than eight weeks in duration and in the United States cough continues to be one of the most common reasons that adults consult medical doctors. Some cases of chronic cough are so debilitating that quality of life is severely impacted leading to depression, anxiety, urinary incontinence, dysphonia, sleep interruption, vomiting, and even rib fractures further adding to the decay in socio-familial dynamics.

Chronic cough is believed to be the result of a hypersensitivity of the cough reflex within the neuronal circuitry that governs the urge to cough, wherein one or more aspects that regulate cough are over-active to stimulus, triggering a cough at abnormal levels. Trials of antitussives have shown heterogeneity in response that may reflect differing pathological processes driving cough in different patients. Experimental antitussives often only engage a single receptor, while the overall cough response is governed by multiple receptors triggered by a large variety of stimuli. A compound acting centrally where all peripheral messages are sent and coordinated may achieve a better outcome than what has been achieved in clinical trials.

About NP-120 (Ifenprodil)

Ifenprodil selectively inhibits N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors containing the NR2B subunit. NMDA receptors are ion-channels found within the central and peripheral nervous system, including the area of the brain responsible for coordinating the cough reflex. They are highly implicated in events such as neuronal plasticity (strengthening of neural pathways) and excitotoxicity (neurotoxic cascade resulting in neuron death).

By inhibiting NMDA receptors, Ifenprodil can diminish excitability of neurons and prevent the relaying of information along neuronal circuitry, including the cough reflex. Ifenprodil may also inhibit the neuroplastic enhancement of central and peripheral cough response neurons.

About Algernon Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Algernon Pharmaceuticals is a Canadian clinical stage drug development and repurposing company investigating multiple drugs for unmet global medical needs. Algernon Pharmaceuticals has active research programs for IPF with chronic cough, and chronic kidney disease, and is the parent company of a newly created private subsidiary called Algernon NeuroScience, that is advancing a psychedelic program investigating a proprietary form of psychedelic DMT for stroke.

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Source: Algernon Pharmaceuticals