

Zug, May 30th,2022

AI-powered drug development company Cureteq in-licenses compound from Merck to develop first in class cancer-treatment

- **Cureteq executes the first of what is planned to be a series of in-licensing deals as the company builds a development pipeline across various disease areas**
- **New development path for the compound M8891 identified with support from artificial intelligence (AI) platform, and building on strong preclinical and clinical data established by Merck**
- **Phase 1 study demonstrated acceptable safety and tolerability, and provided preliminary signs of efficacy as monotherapy in patients with solid tumors supporting clinical development of M8891 combination treatments in specific cancer indications**

Cureteq AG (Cureteq), a clinical stage company developing innovative medicines with the support of a sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) platform, has today in-licensed its first compound, and will develop it as a potential first-in-class treatment for multiple cancers, initially for brain and kidney cancer. The development path is guided by AI and builds on strong preclinical and clinical data.

The compound, M8891, is a small-molecule methionine aminopeptidase 2 (MetAP2) inhibitor licensed from global science and technology company Merck based in Darmstadt, Germany. This is the first of what is planned to be a series of acquisitions by Cureteq as the company looks to build a pipeline of novel and better potential medicines against a range of diseases. Cureteq sets out to pioneer a new standard for AI-supported drug development to the benefit of patients, doctors and society.

Cureteq leverages AI to identify the top potential indications of a given molecule and to devise optimized and de-risked clinical development plans. Such an approach provides for accelerated development of new medicines to treat the diseases for which they will be most effective and have the highest chance of becoming available to patients. The AI-platform differentiates from other AI approaches by its breadth and depth, connecting billions of data points according to the most relevant medical concept; this greatly enhances the quality and impact.

Mads Dalsgaard, Chief Executive Officer of Cureteq AG, commented:

“We are very excited to complete our first in-licensing deal and commence development, combining the AI-technology and our medical expertise. M8891 has the potential to be a first-in-class treatment for cancers, such as kidney and brain cancers, which both have a devastating impact on patients’ lives. We are pleased to collaborate with Merck by carrying forward this promising molecule and excited about proving the power of AI in drug development”.

M8891, through a unique mechanism of action (MetAP2 inhibition), inhibits both the cancer cells and their ability to generate new blood vessels in vitro, which is necessary for tumor growth. It is thought that this can potentially suppress the progression of the malignant disease, shrink, or even eliminate the cancer, especially if M8891 is combined with other anti-tumor treatments. Preventing disease progression or shrinking the tumor with safe and tolerable drugs is usually associated with an improved quality of life and helps patients to minimize fatal complications from their disease or may even prolong an otherwise drastically shortened life expectancy.

In a recent phase 1, dose-escalation study in patients with solid tumors, M8891 as monotherapy was demonstrated to have acceptable safety and also showed preliminary signs of anti-tumor efficacy. Such data add to the robust preclinical data package supporting potential anti-tumor activity across a broad range of tumors. Cureteq plans to validate the AI generated hypotheses preclinically and in a multi-cohort, Phase 1b study of M8891 in combination with current standard-of-care treatments for kidney and brain cancer; patient enrollment is expected to commence in 2023.

M8891 will be developed by Oncoteq AG, a newly established subsidiary of Cureteq.

For further information and interview with Chief Executive Officer Mads Dalsgaard, please contact:

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About M8891

M8891 is an orally bioavailable, reversible competitive MetAP2 inhibitor and a potential first-in-class therapeutic agent for the treatment of solid tumors. MetAP2 is responsible for the removal of N-terminal methionine from selected nascent polypeptides chains. MetAP2 function and activity are implicated in tumor cell-associated angiogenesis and proliferation and has been established as a target in studies using fumagillin, a known inhibitor of type 2 methionine aminopeptidase. Suppression of tumor cell growth and metastasis is in part by suppressing angiogenesis.^{1,2} M8891 represents a next generation of reversible, selective, and potent MetAP2 inhibitors, designed specifically to target MetAP2 with a structure distinct from other known inhibitors, including the fumagillin derivatives.^{2,3} M8891 is expected to be effective in patients with solid tumors, e.g., kidney and brain cancers, especially when used in combination with other established antitumor treatments.^{4,5}

About Cureteq AG

Cureteq AG is an asset management and drug development company operating in life-sciences. Cureteq leverages AI to identify promising assets and to de-risk their development plans.

Combining the AI-technology with Cureteq's scientific and medical expertise allows the company to identify molecules that could become effective medicines but are not being prioritized by current owners.

The approach can be applied to a broad range of molecules and diseases allowing Cureteq to build a broad and differentiated development pipeline around clusters of core drug development competences. Cancer is one of the company's focus areas that also includes neurology, immunology, womens health and rare diseases.

For further information please visit Cureteq website www.cureteq.com, and our LinkedIn-page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cureteq/>

About Oncoteq AG

Oncoteq AG is fully owned subsidiary of Cureteq AG and headquartered in Zug, Switzerland, and will be responsible for the development of M8891.

About the in-licensing of M8891

Under the terms of the license agreement, Oncoteq AG obtains an exclusive license to develop and commercialize M8891 in exchange for Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, receiving an upfront, milestones and royalties on sales.

References

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