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Takeda collaborates with Wave Life Sciences

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Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited has announced that it has entered into a research, development and commercial collaboration and multi-program option agreement with Wave Life Sciences Ltd. (Wave) to develop antisense oligonucleotides for genetically-defined neurological diseases.

This partnership supports Takeda’s externalization strategy, which focuses on collaborations that complement its internal pipeline of programs, and represents the next generation of innovative therapies to treat diseases with no current treatment options.

Emiliangelo Ratti, Head, Neuroscience Therapeutic Area Unit at Takeda said, “Takeda is deeply committed to pursuing innovative approaches in neuroscience research and development. Our collaboration with Wave will further enable our focus to accelerate the development of transformational therapies for patients for whom there are currently no treatments available.”

The first component of the collaboration with Wave will focus on programs targeting Huntington’s disease (HD), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) (commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig’s disease), frontotemporal dementia (FTD) and spinocerebellar ataxia type 3 (SCA3). Wave is developing oligonucleotide therapeutics to target diseases that have been historically difficult to treat with small molecules or biologics.

Their molecules are designed to reduce the expression of disease-promoting proteins or to transform the production of dysfunctional mutant proteins into the production of functional proteins, with the potential of treating the targeted disease. The first component of this collaboration will investigate the following potential therapies with the option to co-develop and co-commercialize after demonstration of clinical proof of mechanism:

- WVE-120101 and WVE-120102, which selectively target mutant huntingtin and are currently in Phase 1b/2a clinical trials for the treatment of HD

- WVE-3972-01, which targets C9ORF72and isexpected to be evaluated in clinical studies for the treatment of ALS and FTD beginning in Q4 2018
- Program targeting ATXN3 for the treatment of SCA3

The second component of the collaboration provides Takeda with the rights to exclusively license multiple preclinical programs targeting other neurological disorders including Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. At any one time during a four-year term, the companies may collaborate on up to six preclinical programs.

Daniel Curran, Head, Center for External Innovation at Takeda said, "At Takeda, we are focused on partnering with companies that share our research focus and commitment to deliver transformative medicines to patients. Wave's expertise in optimizing oligonucleotides offers a complementary approach to programs that Takeda is currently pursuing for neurological disorders, maximizing our potential for success, and their pipeline and focus are closely aligned with our own."

This collaboration with Wave is part of Takeda's overall partnership strategy and deepened commitment in neuroscience, which also includes recently signed collaboration agreements with Mindstrong Health to explore the development of digital biomarkers for selected mental health conditions, and Denali Therapeutics, a company with an innovative platform technology for transporting antibodies into the brain, to develop and commercialize therapies for neurodegenerative diseases.