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ASIA EDITION

Gilead buys oral IL-23R inhibitor programme from China's PepStar for $1.27 B

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Clinical programme adds a potentially differentiated oral peptide IL-23 receptor inhibitor to Gileadâ??s inflammation portfolio

US-based Gilead Sciences, Inc. has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire an oral IL-23R inhibitor programme, including lead asset HCXT-2001, from Hong Kong-based PepStar Therapeutics, a privately held, clinical-stage biotechnology company.

HCXT-2001 is an investigational, clinical-stage, oral, macrocyclic peptide inhibitor of IL-23R with an extended half-life, offering a potentially differentiated approach to oral IL-23 pathway inhibition. IL-23R is a clinically validated target in immune-mediated inflammatory diseases, including Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD), with potential applications in psoriasis.

The transaction provides Gilead with worldwide rights to the IL-23R inhibitor programme, including HCXT-2001, and further strengthens Gilead’s growing inflammation and immunology portfolio, where the company is building depth and optionality in selected immune-mediated diseases through multiple complementary mechanisms and modalities.

Under the terms of the agreement, Gilead will acquire an oral IL-23R inhibitor programme, including lead asset HCXT-2001, from PepStar for $1.275 billion in upfront cash consideration, subject to customary adjustments, which is payable at closing. Closing of the transaction is subject to certain customary conditions.