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Singapore: CoDa Therapeutics has raised an additional $19.8 million (NZ$24.5 million) from Russian investment firm RusnanoMedInvest (RMI) under its Series B round. The total funding now stands at approximately $39.7 million (NZ$49 million).

All current investors, including Auckland-based BioPacificVentures, participated in the round. RMI is a Russian government company that invests in medicine and pharmaceuticals. The RMI investment is accompanied by a licensing of CoDa intellectual property rights in Russia, potentially accelerating the availability of its drug Nexagon on the Russian market. CoDa will receive an upfront license fee and royalties based on sales.

The financing will be partly used to expand late stage clinical trials of Nexagon as a treatment for diabetic foot ulcers. CoDa recently initiated a 160 patient phase II diabetic foot ulcer trial in the US and will include additional clinical sites in Russia over coming months.

CoDa is also currently conducting a 300-patient phase IIb trial of Nexagon for the treatment of people with venous leg ulcers in New Zealand, the US and South Africa. Results from an earlier trial showed Nexagon to be highly effective as a novel wound therapy for venous leg ulcers. In that trial, nearly one third of patients' wounds were completely healed after just four weeks following only three applications of Nexagon (compared to only six percent healing in a control group).

Mr Bradford J Duft, co-founder, president and chief executive officer of CoDa Therapeutics, said, "This investment by RMI, which brings the total funds raised by CoDa to over $90 million, is a significant validation of the New Zealand originated science co-invented by Professor Colin Green at the University of Auckland. CoDa is privileged to have a strong clinical and research team based in our Auckland office, led by Chief Operating Officer Tracey Sunderland, along with the support of local investor BioPacificVentures and, importantly during our continuing growth, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)."

CoDa has 70 percent of its staff in New Zealand, including five scientists based at the University of Auckland, where Professor Green and his team are also based.

"This round of financing will allow CoDa to continue its global growth plans from New Zealand," explained Mr Andrew Kelly, executive director of BioPacificVentures, a leading life science company investor in New Zealand. "BPV is delighted to be able to help fund this."

Mr Murray Bain, acting deputy chief executive, science and innovation at MBIE commented, "We are excited to see one of our portfolio companies achieve significant commercial milestones like this. The additional funding will further assist in the development the next generation of wound healing drugs, in conjunction with funding that has been provided by MBIE through the TBG program."