

Medivir offloads China rights for Hepatitis C drug to Ascleitis

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Swedish drug giant Medivir recently announced that it has offloaded its exclusive rights to develop, manufacture and commercialize Hepatitis C drug, MIV-802, in China to domestic biotech firm Ascleitis. Under the deal, Ascleitis has paid Medivir an undisclosed payment upfront and is entitled to receive milestones based on successful development through commercial launch and tiered royalties on net sales of MIV-802 containing products. The deal will help Ascleitis build a robust pipeline of drugs for Hepatitis C .

"We are pleased to have Ascleitis as a partner with their track record in advancing development of pharmaceuticals in Greater China and their portfolio of antivirals with which to create a combination drug against hepatitis C," said, Christine Lind, chief executive of Medivir.

Ascleitis will fund clinical development, manufacturing and commercialization of MIV-802 in Greater China. Ascleitis' pipeline of HCV inhibitors include four late-stage candidates: Danoprevir (ASC08), an NDA-filed HCV protease inhibitor, licensed from Roche; Ravidasvir (ASC16), a HCV NS5A inhibitor, licensed from Presidio Pharmaceuticals, which has completed Phase II; and ASC09, a HIV protease inhibitor, licensed from Janssen, which has completed Phase IIa testing. Additionally, Ascleitis has licensed ASC06 from Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, a first-in-class siRNA therapeutics for the treatment of liver cancer.

"Ascleitis has filed an NDA in China for its first HCV NS3/4A medicine, danoprevir, at the end of 2016 and has an HCV NS5A inhibitor in the late stage clinical development. By acquiring MIV-802, a nucleotide NS5B inhibitor, Ascleitis is committed to treating, eventually eliminating, hepatitis C in greater China with its multiple leading antiviral combinations including MIV-802," commented Dr Jinzi Wu, CEO of Ascleitis.

MIV-802 is a potent, pangenotypic nucleotide inhibitor of the HCV NS5B polymerase. Hepatitis C treatments comprise combinations of pharmaceuticals with different antiviral mechanisms. Preclinical data indicate that MIV-802 can be used effectively in combination with other classes of antiviral agents for the treatment of HCV, including protease inhibitors, non-nucleoside NS5B inhibitors, and NS5A inhibitors.