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# Brii Biosciences expands focus to neurosciences

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**Zhijian Chen, Ph.D., named Strategic Scientific Advisor**

Brii Biosciences, a clinical-stage company committed to serving patients' needs and improving public health in China and around the world, has announced two leadership appointments that will guide the company's expansion into neurosciences as a second therapeutic focus area and guide further research and development efforts. John Kraus, M.D., Ph.D., has joined Brii Bio as Senior Vice President, Neurosciences Therapy Area to lead efforts to identify and develop novel medicines targeting central nervous system (CNS) diseases. Zhijian "James" Chen, Ph.D., a leading expert in the fields of immunology, inflammation research and biomedical science, has been named a strategic scientific advisor, supporting the company to advance scientific research efforts.

Brii Bio has established a robust pipeline of assets targeting infectious diseases that present a significant burden to patients and the healthcare system in China," said Zhi Hong, Ph.D., co-founder and CEO of Brii Bio. "With John's leadership, we are now expanding our focus to include CNS diseases where we see a vast opportunity to improve patient care by accelerating the development and delivery of breakthrough medicines and to open doors for partners. Further, we are delighted to have the opportunity to benefit from Zhijian's expertise as a world-class immunologist as we expand our R&D efforts across therapeutic areas."

Brii Bio is focused on accelerating the development and delivery in China of breakthrough medicines that address a significant and unique medical need for patients in the country. Rising rates of urbanization in China, a vastly expanding aging population and emerging science opening the door to novel ways to treat CNS diseases have recently converged to make neurosciences an area of great interest for drug development and commercialization.

"Having seen firsthand the devastating impact that CNS diseases can have on patients' lives, I have devoted the better part of my career to finding and developing better treatments," said Dr. Kraus. "Brii Bio has a unique opportunity to not only serve as a bridge to bring novel medicines to patients in China, but also to leverage the vast digital platforms available in China to improve patient care. I am enthusiastic about the potential of this model and excited to lead the team as we apply it in a new disease area."

"I look forward to supporting the experienced leadership team at Brii Bio to advance the company's clinical and preclinical pipeline, which I believe holds great potential to improve the treatment of serious diseases for millions of patients," said

Professor Chen.

Dr. Kraus, who joins Brii Bio's leadership team and reports directly to Dr. Hong, brings more than 20 years of experience in clinical, academic and pharmaceutical medicine and drug development. Most recently, he was Vice President, Drug Development Services for the global clinical research organization, ICON, plc. Prior to that, Dr. Kraus was a vice president and medicine development leader at GlaxoSmithKline for more than 12 years, including eight years within the Neurosciences Therapy Area Unit, ultimately as Head of Medical Governance. There, he led, contributed to or managed drug development programs in a wide range of CNS diseases. Before joining industry, Dr. Kraus was Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina (UNC), Chapel Hill; Head, Adult Admissions Psychiatry at Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh, NC; and Associate Director of the UNC Psychiatry Clinical Research Unit. Dr. Kraus received his M.D. and Ph.D. in neurobiology from Duke University.

Professor Chen is an Investigator of Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Professor in the Department of Molecular Biology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. He is also Director of Inflammation Research Center and George L. MacGregor Distinguished Chair in Biomedical Science at UT Southwestern. Prior to moving to Dallas, Professor Chen was a senior scientist at ProScript Inc. where he helped discover the proteasome inhibitor VELCADE, a medicine used for the treatment of multiple myeloma. After joining UT Southwestern in 1997, Professor Chen's research led to several important discoveries related to the proteins and signaling pathways involved in immune regulation. For his work, Professor Chen has received numerous honors including the National Academy of Science Award in Molecular Biology (2012), the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) Merck Award (2015), the Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences from the Foundation of NIH (2018), the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences (2019), and the Switzer Prize (2019). Dr. Chen is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.