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Contact: Art McDermott / AIDS Research Alliance
Desk: 310-358-2423 x220 Cell: 323-829-8444
amcdermott@aidsresearch.org

AIDS Research Alliance gains exclusive rights to new technology from Stanford University

License will accelerate the development of prostratin—the first in a new class of drugs for the treatment of HIV/AIDS.

(LOS ANGELES, CA) AIDS Research Alliance announced today the signing of a new licensing agreement with Stanford University, transferring exclusive rights of a novel technology developed by Dr. Paul Wender and colleagues of Stanford to AIDS Research Alliance. This new technology (*Science*, Vol 320, p 649-652, 2 May 2008) will allow AIDS researchers to synthesize the natural compound, prostratin. Early tests conducted at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and on-going pre-clinical studies conducted by AIDS Research Alliance indicate that prostratin targets *latent* HIV—the virus not killed by existing anti-HIV therapies. Previously, prostratin had to be collected from natural resources—an expensive and cumbersome process.

“Dr. Wender’s genius removes a major hurdle to the therapeutic development of this promising compound,” said Carolyn H. Carlburg, President & CEO of AIDS Research Alliance. The ability to produce prostratin synthetically will significantly reduce future costs, making prostratin a more viable drug candidate, Carlburg said.

“When used in combination with existing antiretroviral drugs, prostratin may one day help treating physicians eradicate all virus from the body—a feat not yet possible using existing therapies,” stated Dr. Stephen J. Brown, Medical Director at AIDS Research Alliance.

Dr Brown explains: “Current therapies suppress the virus, but they do not completely eradicate virus from the body. Rather, some viral particles lay dormant in pockets or “reservoirs,” avoiding the reach of today’s anti-HIV drugs. When existing treatments are interrupted, the HIV reservoir floods the body with new virus, re-igniting the infection. Thus, no cure for AIDS is possible without emptying the HIV reservoir.”

“AIDS Research Alliance has the only new drug in development that targets the HIV reservoir,” states Dr. Brown. AIDS Research Alliance has been studying how to flush virus from the HIV reservoir for more than a decade, said Dr. Brown.

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If approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA), prostratin would be the first in a new class of drugs and unveil a novel way to treat HIV/AIDS, Carlburg says.

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About AIDS Research Alliance. AIDS Research Alliance is the nation's only independent, not-for-profit research organization licensed by the National Institutes of Health to develop an anti-HIV drug. AIDS Research Alliance helped to develop about half of current anti-HIV drugs. AIDS Research Alliance conducts research seeking an HIV vaccine and a cure for AIDS. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration conducted a preliminary review of AIDS Research Alliance's prostratin data in February 2009. Additional pre-clinical studies will continue over the next year.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AIDS_Research_Alliance

www.aidsresearch.org

Watch a short video about this research on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAnrKoDc79c>