Cend Therapeutics and Qilu Pharmaceutical Announce Partnership

February 16, 2021

SAN DIEGO and JINAN, China, Feb. 16, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- **Cend Therapeutics, Inc.**, a clinical-stage biotech company, and **Qilu Pharmaceutical,** a major Chinese pharmaceutical company, announced today that the companies have entered a Collaboration and License Agreement to develop and commercialize Cend's investigational drug, CEND-1, in Greater China.

Cend presented favorable clinical results at the European Society for Molecular Oncology (ESMO) meeting September 2020 and is advancing into Phase 2 clinical trials in pancreatic cancer with CEND-1 in combination with gemcitabine and nab-paclitaxel. The Company is planning registration clinical trials in pancreatic cancer and will explore combinations with additional therapies, including immunotherapies, as well as expansion of its programs into additional solid tumor cancers.

"This partnership with Qilu will help us bring our treatment to patients with pancreatic and other solid tumor cancers in China. This collaboration will also speed global development to bring the treatment to market expeditiously. Qilu's excellent development team and market position will position CEND-1 for success in China," commented David Slack, CEO of Cend.

"CEND-1 has generated encouraging clinical results in combination with standard of care chemotherapy for the treatment of pancreatic cancer, which remains a significant health issue in China. We are pleased to work with Cend to advance this program and explore broader potential applications for CEND-1," commented Oliver Kong, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Corporate Vice President of Qilu.

About the Qilu-Cend Partnership

In the Collaboration and License Agreement, Qilu will gain exclusive rights to CEND-1 in Greater China, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. Qilu will take on development as well as commercialization responsibilities within Greater China. Cend will continue to retain all rights outside of Greater China. Qilu will pay Cend an up-front license fee of US$10 million. Cend will be eligible to receive up to $225 million in milestones as well as tiered double digit royalties on product sales in the region.

About CEND-1

CEND-1 is an investigational drug that modifies the tumor microenvironment. It is targeted to tumors by its affinity for *alpha*-v integrins, which are selectively expressed in tumors but not normally expressed in healthy tissues. CEND-1 is a cyclic peptide that, once bound to these integrins, is cleaved by protease expressed in tumors to release a peptide fragment, called a CendR fragment, which binds to a second receptor, called neuropilin, to activate a novel uptake pathway that causes anticancer drugs to more selectively penetrate solid tumors. CEND-1 has also been shown to further modify the tumor microenvironment by selectively depleting tumor-infiltrating immunosuppressive cells, including T regulatory cells, and to increase the number of cancer-fighting immune cells within the tumor, potentially enabling patients' immune systems or immunotherapies to more effectively fight cancer.

About Qilu Pharmaceutical

Qilu Pharmaceutical is one of the leading vertically integrated pharmaceutical companies in China focusing on the development, manufacturing and marketing of innovative medicines, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) & finished formulations. Qilu currently has 12 subsidiaries, 10 manufacturing sites and over 23,000 employees worldwide. Qilu ranks among the top Chinese pharmaceutical companies by sales revenue in 2019. Dedicated to offering more affordable medicines to the world and improving people's well-being, Qilu has exported its products to over 80 countries. Qilu has always maintained an innovative development strategy based on unmet medical needs and is achieving its organic growth strategy utilizing a strong pool of 2000+ scientists spread across 5 R&D platforms based in the US (Seattle WA, Boston MA, San Francisco CA) and China (Shanghai, and Jinan). To date, Qilu has launched 200+ products with 30+ products "First to launch" in China and 3 products "D181 launch" in US. The company also has a robust pipeline, including 200+ generic products, 20+ biosimilar products and 50+ innovative products. Qilu's finished formulations and APIs have been approved by US FDA, European Medicines Agency(EMA), Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) of Australia, Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) of UK, PMDA of Japan and other national regulatory authorities.

About Cend Therapeutics

Cend is a clinical-stage biotech company focused on a novel approach to enable more effective treatments for solid tumor cancers. Poor penetration of drugs into tumors is a major issue in cancer therapy as it limits access and therefore efficacy of current therapies. The CendR Platform provides a targeted tissue penetration capability to specifically enhance drug delivery to tumors. The presence of immunosuppressive cell types, such as T regulatory cells, in the tumor microenvironment can limit the ability of patients' immune systems to fight their cancer and render some tumors refractory to immunotherapies. Cend is applying its technology to deplete such immunosuppressive cells from the tumor microenvironment to enable patients' immune system and immunotherapies to more effectively fight cancer.

For additional information, please visit www.cendrx.com.