

Unicorn Capital Partners, RDIF and AstraZeneca invest in Target Medicals, developing aldosterone synthase inhibitor for the treatment of resistant arterial hypertension

February 1, 2022, Moscow. Unicorn Capital Partners, a biotech-specialized VC fund, based in Moscow, Russia, together with AstraZeneca and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) as co-investors, have entered into an investment agreement with Target Medicals. The financing size is not disclosed, but it should get the company to completion of preclinical proof-of-concept studies, with a purpose to nominate a drug candidate for further clinical trials.

Target Medicals is developing an inhibitor of aldosterone synthase, a key enzyme responsible for production of aldosterone. This hormone is an essential component of renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system, which regulates circulating blood volume and arterial blood pressure.

There are at least 1 billion people globally living with arterial hypertension, of which about 10% develop a resistant form of the disease, which is typically diagnosed when regular intake of three or more antihypertensive drugs, including diuretic, does not lead to reduction of blood pressure down to 140/90 mmHg or lower. Inadequately controlled arterial hypertension is known to increase the risks of various health complications, including fatal ones. Therefore, despite available therapy, there is a high unmet need in new pharmacological options for the treatment of resistant arterial hypertension.

Moreover, in a significant number of patients, arterial hypertension is associated with increased level of aldosterone, but there are still no targeted pharmacological options for regulation of its synthesis, despite numerous attempts to develop them.

Aldosterone synthase, or CYP11B2, has been known to be particularly difficult to target due to its high similarity with other members of CYP enzymes family, including CYP11B1 responsible for synthesis of cortisol (93% amino acid sequence similarity). It is due to the team's vast experience in structural and functional research of CYP enzymes, the development of targeted inhibitor with superior selectivity has become possible.

Besides resistant hypertension, aldosterone synthase inhibitors can potentially be explored in a number of additional indications, including primary hyperaldosteronism (hereditary, idiopathic, carcinogenic), chronic heart failure, coronary heart disease, left ventricular hypertrophy, renal failure and diabetic nephropathy, aldosterone-induced insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome, liver cirrhosis (also with type II hepatorenal syndrome and resistance to diuretics).

Alexey Vinogradov, Managing Partner and CEO at Unicorn Capital Partners: "We are deeply impressed with the quality and competence of the team, which we believe is capable to develop a first-in-class product working in such science-intensive and highly competitive area as biomedicine. We will do our best to provide not only financial, but also organizational support, helping to combine scientific competencies with the best medical, industrial, and entrepreneurial expertise to create a breakthrough medical product for both Russian and global markets. We have a first-grade syndicate of investors, including RDIF and AstraZeneca, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies. As far as we know, this is the first precedent of its kind when Big Pharma directly invests in the capital of a Russian biotech start-up. We hope this will serve as a positive signal for the development of the entire Russian segment of biomedical innovations."

Kirill Dmitriev, CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), said: "This investment is part of RDIF's strategy to support innovation and promote breakthrough healthcare technologies. It demonstrates the synergy between RDIF and RVC, which was achieved through the integration of a wide network of partners, the successful track record of cooperation between

RDIF and leading companies in medicine and pharmaceuticals, as well as expertise of funds with participation of RVC in the Russian venture capital market. This investment will help Target Medicals at the testing stage of the drug as well as launching it later on the global market, which will significantly improve the quality of life for millions.”

Irina Panarina, GM, AstraZeneca, Russia and Eurasia, emphasized: “AstraZeneca actively supports local R&D, it is one of our priorities in Russia. We have been running accelerators for start-ups for several years now. As well, we are introducing projects to implement innovative solutions into real practice together with leading Russian medical institutions. We aim to expand this support going further, as we see huge potential of Russian solutions in both local and international markets. From this point of view, venture financing is a logical step.”

About:

Unicorn Capital Partners is the managing company of the PharmMed Innovations venture fund, created with the participation of the Russian Venture Company and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation to invest in innovative development of medicines, medical devices and software for use in medicine. We combine the efforts of doctors, scientists, financiers, and entrepreneurs to ensure that advanced scientific ideas grow into new world-class products available to patients. Website: www.unicpartners.com

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) was founded in 2011 to invest in the equity capital of companies primarily in Russia, together with leading foreign financial and strategic investors. The fund acts as a catalyst for direct investment in the Russian economy. At the moment, RDIF has a successful track record of implementing more than 100 projects with foreign partners totaling more than 2.1 trillion rubles, covering almost all regions of the Russian Federation. RDIF has established joint strategic partnerships with leading international co-investors from 18 countries totaling more than \$40 billion. Additional information can be found on the website: www.rdif.ru

AstraZeneca (LSE/STO/Nasdaq: AZN) is an international science-based biopharmaceutical company focused on research, development and commercialization of prescription drugs primarily in the therapeutic areas of oncology, cardiology, nephrology and metabolism, respiratory and autoimmune diseases. Based in Cambridge, UK, AstraZeneca is present in more than 100 countries and its innovative products are used by millions of patients around the world. Follow the company's news on www.astrazeneca.ru and Twitter @AstraZeneca.

Target Medicals is an early stage biotech company, a resident of the Skolkovo Foundation, developing a selective aldosterone synthase inhibitor, a new class of drugs for the treatment of a number of cardiovascular diseases caused or accompanied by increased aldosterone production . The project is based on proprietary approaches in a rational discovery and evaluation of chemical compounds to achieve an optimal efficiency, selectivity and safety, including the resolution of the crystal structures of drug-target complexes.

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