Curis Announces Hedgehog and Wnt Antagonist Data Presentation at AACR

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--April 17, 2007--Curis, Inc. (NASDAQ:CRIS), a drug development company focused on novel targeted medicines primarily for cancer treatment, today announced that its data was included in two presentations at the 98th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR).

At AACR, Curis also disclosed that its April 2005 discovery collaboration agreement with Genentech focused on developing drug candidates that target the Wnt signaling pathway, particularly for potential cancer indications. Abnormal activation of Wnt signaling is present in various cancers, including colon, breast and ovarian cancers. Developing drug candidates that are designed to inhibit, or antagonize, Wnt signaling could hopefully provide a potential option in certain cancers.

On April 14, data was presented during an Educational Session titled "Targeting the Wnt Pathway in Cancer," which included a discussion of the Curis-Genentech joint effort in the identification of small molecule inhibitors of the Wnt pathway, under the April 2005 discovery collaboration agreement. The parties' research efforts have yielded a class of Wnt antagonists that, in preclinical studies, inhibit the Wnt pathway by acting upstream of beta-catenin, which is believed to be an important molecular target in the Wnt pathway. Inhibiting such an upstream molecular target may represent an attractive approach for potential inhibition of the Wnt pathway in cancer cells with abnormally active Wnt signaling.

In addition to the Educational Session, a poster was also presented at the conference describing the use of Hedgehog antagonists in a preclinical pancreatic tumor model. In these studies, Genentech and Curis scientists used a potent small molecule antagonist of the Hedgehog pathway on mice implanted with primary human pancreatic cancer xenografts. The scientists found that antagonizing the Hedgehog pathway results in growth delay of a subset of these primary human pancreatic cancer xenografts.

The poster also included data supporting a mechanism whereby some tumors may utilize the Hedgehog pathway to promote their growth by sending signals to the surrounding normal tissue (termed paracrine tumor-stromal hedgehog signaling). These studies suggest that cancers dependent upon such cross-talk between tumors and surrounding normal tissue might respond to the inhibition of the Hedgehog pathway.

In January 2007, Genentech initiated a phase I clinical trial of a systemically administered small molecule Hedgehog antagonist for cancer. The phase I trial is an open-label study in patients with locally advanced or metastatic cancers that are refractory to standard therapy, or for whom no standard therapies exist. The primary objectives of the phase I trial are to evaluate the safety and tolerability of escalating doses of the phase I molecule and to establish the maximum tolerated dose and dose limiting toxicities. The trial is expected to enroll approximately 50 patients spread across several dose-escalating cohorts.

"We are pleased with the recent progress that we've made in our programs under collaboration with Genentech, particularly with the recent initiation of a systemically administered Hedgehog antagonist Phase I clinical trial," said Daniel R. Passeri, President and Chief Executive Officer of Curis. "We believe that the Wnt and Hedgehog data that were presented at AACR continue to demonstrate the depth of the biological and mechanistic understanding of both of these programs and we look forward to further advances in each of the Hedgehog and Wnt programs."

About Curis, Inc.

Curis is a drug development company that is committed to leveraging its innovative signaling pathway drug technologies to create new medicines, primarily for cancer. In expanding its drug development efforts in the field of cancer through its Targeted Cancer Drug Development Platform, the Company is building upon its previous experiences in targeting signaling pathways in the areas of cancer, neurological disease, hair growth regulation and cardiovascular disease. For more information, visit www.curis.com.

Cautionary Statement: This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, including Curis' belief that Wnt antagonists could provide a potential therapeutic benefit in certain cancers, that Wnt inhibitors that are upstream of beta-catenin are potentially effective in targeting tumor types with abnormally active Wnt signaling, that the preclinical Hedgehog antagonist data suggest that cancers dependent upon such cross-talk between tumors and surrounding normal tissue might respond to the inhibition of the Hedgehog pathway, and that we look forward to further advances in each of the Hedgehog and Wnt programs. Forward-looking statements used in this press release may contain the words "believes", "expects", "anticipates", "plans", "seeks", "estimates" or similar expressions. These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve risks, uncertainties, assumptions and other factors that may cause the Company's actual results to be materially different from those indicated by such forward-looking statements.

In addition, any forward-looking statements represent the Company's views only as of today and should not be relied upon as representing its views as of any subsequent date. The Company disclaims any intention or obligation to update any of the forward-looking statements after the date of this press release whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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