



ILC Therapeutics announces partnership with University of St Andrews to combat COVID-19

St Andrews, Scotland, 22nd June 2020: UK-based biotechnology firm ILC Therapeutics has announced a research partnership with the University of St Andrews in a bid to progress a therapeutic drug which can treat COVID-19 towards clinical trials.

The biotech start-up is working with the university's Dr Catherine Adamson from the School of Biology, specifically looking at the role that its drug Alfacyte™ can play in preventing COVID-19-induced Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). By avoiding the onset of ARDS, this could reduce the need for many patients to be on a ventilator and could potentially limit both short and long-term damage to patients' lungs.

Alfacyte™ is a drug based on a new Interferon Alpha subtype, Interferon Alpha 14, which is the most potent antiviral interferon in existence and requires very small doses for treatment. Interferons are natural human molecules which have strong antiviral properties. While Interferon Alpha 2 has been used globally for treatment of certain COVID-19 patients, ILC Therapeutics believes that Interferon Alpha 14 could be much more effective in the prevention of ARDS.

Dr Adamson specialises in virology and the development of antiviral drugs. She spent many years working for the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) HIV Drug Resistance Program and another major area of her work surrounds the role that interferons play within viral diseases and their subsequent treatment options.

ILC Therapeutics Founder and Chief Scientific Officer Professor William Stimson said, "We are delighted to be working with the University of St Andrews to develop our research and work as quickly as possible to bring this potential treatment option to those who need it. Dr Adamson's work in the field of virology is highly respected, and to have her backing in our research for Alfacyte™ is invaluable as we progress towards eventual clinical trials."

Dr Adamson added, "I welcome the opportunity to work with ILC Therapeutics to carry out further research into the part interferons play in the innate immune system's ability to fight COVID-19. By exploring this in more detail, we can hopefully move closer to having viable treatment options in the coming years."

Dr Adamson will examine the effectiveness of Alfacyte™ in preventing COVID-19 viral replication in cultured human cells. This is a key step within the development of Alfacyte™ and is an important part of the pathway which leads to clinical trials.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

For further information please contact Rebecca Durnin on rebecca@mediahouse.co.uk / 07801 821 556 or Ibrahim Khalil on ibrahim@mediahouse.co.uk / 07943 759 042.

About ILC Therapeutics

ILC Therapeutics Ltd is an early stage biotechnology company focused on modulating the Innate Immune System through the development of novel peptide therapeutics for the treatment of Cancer, Atopic Dermatitis, Psoriasis and Allergic Asthma amongst other conditions. More recently however, ILC Therapeutics has discovered that its ongoing research has potential to treat COVID-19.

Interest in NK cell therapy is exploding and NK cells are a type of Innate Lymphoid Cell 1 (ILC-1) modulated by alpha interferons. ILC Therapeutics Ltd.'s hybrid, patented interferon alpha has been shown to have a powerful stimulatory effect on NK cells and this is critical to maintaining NK cell activity inside tumours where the cancer is trying to switch them off and escape destruction. ILC Therapeutics' Hybrid 1 has shown modulatory effects on tissue based ILC-2 networks (Atopic Dermatitis) and ILC-3 networks associated with Psoriasis. This work has now been re-focused to study the effects of interferon alpha on COVID-19.

The company was founded by Prof. W. H. Stimson FRSE, who was the founder of the Department of Immunology at The University of Strathclyde. Bill has been involved in eight start-up/spin-out biotech companies. He has been a long-term consultant to five multinational companies including Akzo Nobel, Rhone-Poulenc and Johnson & Johnson. Bill has published 215 scientific papers and 25 patents and was involved in the use of the first human monoclonal antibodies for cancer therapy.

For more information on ILC Therapeutics, please visit: www.ilctherapeutics.com

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