

ValiRx plc

ValiRx develops prototype non-invasive test for cancer

16 September 2008, London. ValiRx (AIM: VAL, "ValiRx", "the Company"), the cancer therapeutics and diagnostics company, has announced that its diagnostics division in Belgium ("ValiBio") is now progressing a prototype Nucleosomics™ cancer detection test to the next stage of development, which will include testing patient blood samples. If successful, the test could pave the way for non-invasive tests for early cancers based on detecting "epigenetic" histone modifications in blood samples that correlate with a specific cancer.

The first prototype test, based on ValiRx's proprietary technology, has already been shown to provide a quantitative measure of epigenetic histone modifications in blood samples using standard laboratory ELISA methodology. Further prototype tests for other histone modifications are now planned over the next three months. Research currently suggests the de-regulation of normal epigenetic control mechanisms is implicated in the development and progression of certain cancers.

The Nucleosomics™ diagnostic technology has been developed to measure specific histone modifications which have been shown to correlate with certain cancers. Unlike other epigenetic cancer tests in development, ValiBio's prototype tests use simple, low cost and established high-throughput ELISA technology, which means the tests can be performed on standard instrumentation available in all pathology laboratories.

ValiBio now plans to use this first prototype test, as well as further prototype tests with blood samples from patients who have been positively diagnosed with cancer to determine the diagnostic predictive correlation of the kits. Collaborations have been set up between ValiBio and hospitals in Germany and Belgium. If the correlations are positive, the Company will proceed to a wider patient sample study over several months. It is anticipated the first test could be launched by ValiBio within the next fifteen months.

Dr Satu Vainikka ValiRx's Chief Executive said:

"The Nucleosomics test will meet the large unmet medical need for non-invasive early cancer detection to improve patient outcomes. Many of the indications we hope to diagnose are often detected too late for effective treatment. This is especially true of colon and pancreatic cancers that progress without obvious symptoms".

The market for *in vitro* cancer diagnostics is estimated at US\$5 billion, growing at 11% per annum*

* Source: IVD Technology May 2008, <http://www.devicelink.com/ivdt/archive/08/05/003.html>

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Notes to Editors

About ValiRx - www.valirx.com

ValiRx plc (AIM:VAL, 'ValiRx') is a cancer therapeutics and diagnostics company headquartered in London, England and admitted to AIM in October 2006. The Company operates through two subsidiaries, ValiPharma (formerly trading as Cronos Therapeutics) (www.valipharma.com), a UK-based epigenetic drug discovery and development business and ValiBio SA (www.valibio.com), a Belgium-based oncology diagnostics operation.

Therapeutics -- ValiPharma

ValiRx utilises a cells own inherent gene control machinery to silence genes involved in cancer cell progression, effectively "switching off" genes involved in certain forms of cancer through its platform technology GeneICE™ (Gene Inactivation by Chromatin Engineering),. GeneICE™ works through the recruitment of silencing complexes known as Histone Deacetylase Complexes (HDACs) to target genes involved in cancer. ValiRx's lead product VAL 101 targets the anti-apoptotic gene BCL-2 which is over expressed in many cancers including in pancreatic cancer. The Company has also recently expanded its pre-clinical portfolio to include VAL 201 in prostate cancer.

Gene silencing technology platform potentially represents an innovative and ground breaking new approach to cancer treatment as it allows for the development of targeted, personalised medicine and treatment for patients. GeneICE™ is also applicable to a wide variety of other genetic disorders such as in the fields of neurology and inflammatory diseases.

Diagnostics - ValiBio

ValiRx currently has two epigenetic diagnosis products - HyperGenomics™, a method for the detection and identification of hypersensitive sites in cells and Nucleosomics™, a non-invasive (blood) test for early cancer diagnosis based on epigenetic signal changes associated with malignancy - which it licences to its subsidiary, ValiBio.

Epigenetics

Epigenetics is the study and manipulation of regulatory factors which regulate and determine gene expression.

Unlike mutations which occur in DNA, epigenetic changes are reversible. The 'epigenetic' modification of the genome may take many forms, such as addition of external chemical groups for example methylation, acetylation and ubiquitination on to histone proteins associated with DNA.

Research currently suggests the de-regulation of normal epigenetic control mechanisms is implicated in the development and progression of certain cancers. Hence, compounds which specifically target and reverse these changes are attractive and potentially powerful candidates for future therapeutic approaches to cancer.

Personalised medicine

Personalised medicine refers to tailoring treatment strategies to work differently in different individuals, dependent upon such factors such as their genetic profile, epigenetic profile, environment and the presence of other diseases in the individual.