

Neurona Therapeutics Announces C-Suite Leadership Team

San Francisco, CA, December 13, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE)— [Neurona Therapeutics](#), a clinical-stage biotherapeutics company advancing restorative neural cell therapies to treat chronic neurological disorders, today announced three promotions within its leadership team: Catherine Priest, Ph.D., previously Neurona’s vice president of preclinical development, has been appointed to chief development officer, Gautam Banik, Ph.D., formerly Neurona’s vice president of manufacturing and process sciences has been appointed chief technology officer, and David Blum, M.D., who served as the company’s head of clinical development, has been appointed to chief medical officer.

“These promotions recognize the strategic leadership that these highly experienced executives have demonstrated in steering the organization through significant research and development progress and milestones, said Cory Nicholas, Ph.D., Neurona’s president and chief executive officer. “Advancing NRTX-1001, the first of our innovative regenerative neural cell therapies, into the clinic is the culmination of an enormous amount of hard work by the Neurona team and a testament to the leadership of these three individuals. I am delighted to be able to promote Catherine, Gautam, and David into these newly created roles, and I look forward to their continued contributions towards our success. Together, with our talented team, we are excited to move to the next chapter of Neurona’s evolution, bringing the company’s pioneering cell therapies to people suffering from chronic disorders of the nervous system.”

Dr. Nicholas continued, “Dr. Priest led the investigational new drug (IND)-enabling work required to generate compelling preclinical safety and efficacy data for NRTX-1001, applying her significant experience in the translational development of stem cell-based medicines, relevant model systems, and regulatory guidelines. Dr. Banik’s extensive experience in process development and clinical manufacturing of stem cell products has been key to the development of Neurona’s manufacturing processes and production of NRTX-1001 clinical lots in the company’s own cGMP facility. Dr. Blum, a neurologist by training, is also a seasoned pharmaceutical executive who has secured drug approvals in the U.S., Canada and Europe and designed the first-in human clinical trial of NRTX-1001 for chronic focal epilepsy.”

Catherine Priest is the chief development officer at Neurona Therapeutics. She was most recently a senior science officer at the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), where she managed a grant portfolio of translational and clinical programs. Previously, Dr. Priest led the preclinical cellular therapeutics group at Geron Corporation, working on treatments for spinal cord injury, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. During that time, Geron developed the first successful IND application for an embryonic stem cell-derived cellular therapeutic that was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in a clinical trial. Dr. Priest also managed a research group at Bayer Biotechnology and was an assistant professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, where her lab focused on neuroendocrine modulation of behavior and neural circuitry. Dr. Priest received a Ph.D. in neuroanatomy and cell biology from the University of California at Los Angeles School of



Medicine, and a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from Kalamazoo College in Michigan.

Gautam Banik is chief technical officer at Neurona Therapeutics. Prior to joining Neurona he was vice president of manufacturing and process sciences at Cellerant Therapeutics where he developed a myeloid progenitor stem cell product derived from adult donors for the treatment of neutropenia in acute myelogenous leukemia and acute radiation syndrome. Dr. Banik also developed an antibody drug conjugate product for the treatment of AML. Prior to Cellerant, he worked in the Process Sciences group at Cell Genesys. During this period, Dr. Banik held a number of positions with increasing responsibility including leading the development of manufacturing processes and scale up to commercial scale for cell therapy products such as GVAX immunotherapy. He also worked on a number of gene therapy and viral vector products. Dr. Banik received his Ph.D. in engineering sciences from Dartmouth College and a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai.

David Blum is chief medical officer at Neurona and has worked in clinical development positions in the pharmaceutical industry for over 19 years. As a medical project leader, he secured four NDA or sNDA approvals as well as approvals in EU and Canada. He previously served as senior medical director at GSK, and as head of neurology clinical research at Sunovion Pharmaceuticals. Prior to working in the pharmaceutical industry, he was in clinical practice as a neurologist at the Barrow Neurological Institute in Arizona for 10 years, where he was director of the epilepsy program. He has authored or co-authored over 50 full-length papers in neurology-related areas. He received his M.D. from the University of California at San Diego and completed neurology residency and neurophysiology fellowship at the University of California at Los Angeles.

About Neurona's Phase 1/2 clinical trial of NRTX-1001 for MTLE

Neurona's multi-center, Phase 1/2 clinical trial is designed to evaluate the safety, tolerability, and efficacy of a single administration of NRTX-1001 for drug-resistant mesial temporal lobe epilepsy (MTLE). The first stage of the trial is an open label dose-escalation study in up to 10 people with MTLE. The second stage will consist of a randomized, blinded investigation of NRTX-1001 compared to a control group to determine safety and efficacy in up to 30 people with MTLE. Patient recruitment will soon begin at approximately 10 clinical epilepsy centers across the United States. For more information, please visit clinicaltrials.gov (NCT05135091).

About MTLE

MTLE primarily affects the internal structures of the temporal lobe, where seizures often begin in a structure called the hippocampus. MTLE is the most common type of focal epilepsy. For people with seizures resistant to drugs, epilepsy surgery - where the damaged temporal lobe is surgically removed or ablated by laser - can be an option for some. However, the current surgical options are not available or effective for all, are tissue-destructive, and can have significant adverse effects.

About NRTX-1001



NRTX-1001 is a targeted neural cell therapy derived from human pluripotent stem cells. The fully-differentiated nerve cells, called interneurons, secrete the inhibitory neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). Delivered as a one-time dose, the human interneurons are intended to integrate and innervate on-target, providing long-term GABAergic inhibition to repair hyperexcitable neural networks that underlie epilepsy, as well as other disorders of the nervous system.

About Neurona

Neurona's cell therapies have single-dose curative potential. Based on a novel neural cell lineage developed by the company's scientific founders, Neurona has built a robust regenerative platform and is developing off-the-shelf, allogeneic neuronal, glial, and gene-edited cell therapy candidates that provide long-term integration and repair of dysfunctional neural networks for multiple neurological disorders. For more information about Neurona, visit www.neuronatherapeutics.com

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