



Vir Biotechnology Announces Intent to Collaborate with Biogen on Manufacturing of Antibodies to Potentially Treat COVID-19

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SAN FRANCISCO, March 12, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Vir Biotechnology, Inc. (Nasdaq: VIR) today announced that it has signed a letter of intent with Biogen Inc. (Nasdaq: BIIB) for the development and clinical manufacturing of human monoclonal antibodies for the potential treatment of COVID-19, the disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Because of the urgency of the situation, the companies have begun work while a Clinical Development and Manufacturing Agreement is being negotiated. Subject to the completion of a definitive agreement, Biogen would continue cell line development, process development, and clinical manufacturing activities in order to advance the development of Vir's proprietary antibodies.

"These exceptional circumstances presented by the threat of COVID-19 require that we work with great urgency in the interest of the public good," said George Scangos, Ph.D., CEO, Vir. "Biogen is one of the global leaders in cell line and process development for advanced biologics; tapping into their capabilities will provide us with a U.S. base for supply and manufacture of antibody therapies."

Vir has identified a number of monoclonal antibodies that bind to SARS-CoV-2, which were isolated from individuals who had survived a SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) infection. The company is conducting research to determine if its antibodies, or additional antibodies that it may be able to identify, can be effective as treatment and/or prophylaxis against SARS-CoV-2.

About Vir's Antibody Platform

Vir has a robust method for capitalizing on unusually successful immune responses naturally occurring in people who are protected from, or have recovered from, infectious diseases. The platform is used to identify rare antibodies from survivors that have the potential to treat and prevent rapidly evolving and/or previously untreatable pathogens via direct pathogen neutralization and immune system stimulation. Vir engineers the fully human antibodies that it discovers to enhance their therapeutic potential. This platform has been used to identify and develop antibodies for pathogens including Ebola (mAb114, currently in use in the Democratic Republic of Congo), hepatitis B virus, influenza A, malaria, and others.

About Vir Biotechnology

Vir Biotechnology is a clinical-stage immunology company focused on combining immunologic insights with cutting-edge technologies to treat and prevent serious infectious diseases. Vir has assembled four technology platforms that are designed to stimulate and enhance the immune system by exploiting critical observations of natural immune processes. Its current development pipeline consists of five product candidates targeting hepatitis B virus, influenza A, human immunodeficiency virus, and tuberculosis. For more information, please visit www.vir.bio.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Words such as "may," "will," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "estimate," "intend," "potential" and similar expressions (as well as other words or expressions referencing future events, conditions or circumstances) are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based on Vir's expectations and assumptions as of the date of this press release. Each of these forward-looking statements involves risks and uncertainties. Actual results may differ materially from these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements contained in this press release include statements regarding the company's efforts to neutralize the SARS-CoV-2 virus and identify additional potential therapies for SARS-CoV-2, its ability to address the emerging public health epidemic, and its ability to enter into an agreement with Biogen, and its ability to secure a U.S. base for supply and manufacture of antibody therapies. Many factors may cause differences between current expectations and actual results including unexpected safety or efficacy data observed during preclinical or clinical studies, challenges in neutralizing SARS-CoV-2, difficulty in reaching a definitive agreement with Biogen, challenges of collaborating with other companies or government agencies, and challenges in accessing manufacturing capacity. Other factors that may cause actual results to differ from those expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements in this press release are discussed in Vir's filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, including the section titled "Risk Factors" contained therein. Except as required by law, Vir assumes no obligation to update any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in expectations, even as new information becomes available.

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