



European Patent Office grants Silence Therapeutics' Patent on Target for Lead Compound Atu027

London – 9 January 2009 – Silence Therapeutics plc (AIM: SLN), the leading European biopharmaceutical company focused on RNA interference, today announced that the European Patent Office (EPO) has granted a patent to Silence that covers the Company's lead product candidate, Atu027.

On 7 January 2009, the EPO issued EP 1 536 827 B1, "Use Of Protein Kinase N Beta," which covers use of the protein Kinase N3 (PKN3) gene for drug-screening, diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. PKN3 is the target for Silence's lead compound Atu027, which is being developed for the treatment of advanced solid cancers and which is scheduled to enter clinical trials in 2009.

The patent issued to Silence includes claims that cover any small interfering RNA molecule or antisense oligonucleotide used for the treatment of a wide range of cancers.

John Lucas, General Counsel and Vice President, Intellectual Property, added: "This European patent further strengthens Silence's IP position, and follows November's grant of the core US patent by the US Patent and Trademark Office. This latest patent gives Silence an exclusive position not only with Atu027, but also with any siRNA or antisense molecule used to target PKN3 for the treatment of cancer and other diseases."

Iain Ross, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Silence Therapeutics, said: "Silence has made a great start to 2009. Even before our lead compound Atu027 enters the clinic, we have secured our intellectual property with an issued patent. We now have patent protection for Atu027 in the two largest pharmaceutical markets – the US and Europe. Our partners and investors can be confident that Silence can protect its technology and products."

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About Silence Therapeutics plc (www.silence-therapeutics.com)

Silence Therapeutics plc (AIM: SLN) is a leading European RNAi-focused biotechnology company.

RNA interference (RNAi), is a Nobel Prize winning technology and one of the most exciting areas of drug discovery today. It represents a completely new approach to selectively 'silence' or inactivate disease relevant genes and as such it has the potential to create a new class of therapeutic products. RNAi could therefore offer a therapeutic approach to a broad range of diseases (cancer, infectious diseases, inherited diseases), many of which have been regarded as incurable and are not addressed by current therapeutics, therefore providing a large market opportunity.

Silence Therapeutics has developed a platform of novel short interfering RNA ('siRNA') molecules, AtuRNAi, which provide a number of advantages over conventional siRNA molecules, including increased stability against nuclease degradation. In addition, the Company has developed a proprietary systemic delivery system, AtuPLEX. This system enables the functional delivery of siRNA molecules to targeted diseased tissues and cells, while increasing their bioavailability and intracellular uptake.

Following the granting of its patents in Europe, the USA and Australia, Silence Therapeutics is one of only two companies worldwide with a proprietary position on composition of matter for siRNA therapeutics.

Silence's lead internal product, Atu027, is a proprietary AtuRNAi molecule in preclinical development for systemic cancer indications. Atu027 has successfully completed single and repeat dose toxicology and geno-toxicology studies, as well as a 28-day toxicology study using multiple dosing regimens. Silence made a regulatory filing in 2008 and expects to commence clinical trials for Atu027 in 2009.

In March 2008 Silence Therapeutics announced a collaboration with AstraZeneca (LSE: AZN) focused on the development of a range of novel delivery approaches for siRNA molecules. Under the terms of the agreement both Silence Therapeutics and AstraZeneca will be allowed to commercialize the truly novel delivery systems that the two partners develop together.

Silence Therapeutics has granted a licence to AstraZeneca to develop novel AtuRNAi therapeutics against five specific targets. This collaboration was the first industry validation of the potential application of Silence Therapeutics' proprietary AtuRNAi molecules and solidified the Company's leadership position in field of RNAi therapeutics.

The Company's AtuRNAi technology also has been sublicensed to Pfizer via Quark's license to them of the compound RTP-801i-14 for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and a number of other indications. This compound entered a phase II clinical study in July 2008. Silence Therapeutics also has licensed to Quark rights to the AtuRNAi structure for Quark's proprietary compound, AKli-5, which is in a Phase I human clinical study for treatment of acute kidney injury.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release includes forward-looking statements that are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors. These risks and uncertainties could cause actual results to differ materially from those referred to in the forward-looking statements. All forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to Silence Therapeutics and Silence Therapeutics assumes no obligation to update any such forward-looking statements.

Silence Therapeutics is based in London, UK, and Berlin, Germany, and is listed on AIM.



