



SUNESIS

Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Dr. Nicole Onetto to the Board of Directors

September 19, 2019

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Sept. 19, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:SNSS) today announced that Dr. Nicole Onetto, M.D. has been appointed to the Sunesis Board of Directors. Dr. Onetto brings over 20 years of oncology drug development experience to the Board.

"Dr. Onetto's broad experience in oncology and hematology will be invaluable to Sunesis as we develop our kinase inhibitor pipeline, including our lead asset, the non-covalent BTK inhibitor vecabrutinib," said Dayton Misfeldt, Interim Chief Executive Officer of Sunesis. "Dr. Onetto brings to Sunesis a distinguished career with a wealth of experience operationally and strategically in developing and bringing novel and innovative oncology drugs to patients. We welcome Dr. Onetto to the board and look forward to benefitting from her expertise."

"I'm pleased to join the Sunesis board of directors at such a pivotal time in the clinical development of vecabrutinib and look forward to working with the management team to advance the development of Sunesis' portfolio of kinase inhibitors," said Dr. Onetto.

Dr. Onetto is an expert in oncology drug development and translational research. She was most recently Deputy Director and Chief Scientific Officer at the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) from 2009 to 2016. Before her work at OICR, she was Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at ZymoGenetics from 2005 to 2009. Prior to joining ZymoGenetics, she served as Executive Vice President Oncology, and then as Chief Medical Officer and Executive Vice President at OSI Pharmaceuticals from 2002 to 2005. With her team she led the worldwide registration program for Tarceva, one of the first targeted therapies approved for treating cancer patients. Her career in the pharmaceutical industry also includes senior management positions at Bristol-Myers Squibb, Gilead Sciences, Nexstar Pharmaceuticals, which was acquired by Gilead Sciences, and Immunex. At Bristol Myers Squibb, among other responsibilities, she was the worldwide project leader for Taxol.

Dr. Onetto is currently a member of the board of Basilea Pharmaceutica, Sierra Oncology, and NBE Therapeutics. Previously she served for eleven years as a board member of ImmunoGen. Dr. Onetto received her M.D. from the University of Paris and a Master of Pharmacology from the University of Montréal.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company developing novel targeted inhibitors for the treatment of hematologic and solid cancers. Sunesis has built an experienced drug development organization committed to improving the lives of people with cancer. The Company is focused on advancing its novel kinase inhibitor pipeline, with an emphasis on its oral non-covalent BTK inhibitor vecabrutinib. Vecabrutinib is currently being evaluated in a Phase 1b/2 study in adults with chronic lymphocytic leukemia and other B-cell malignancies that have progressed after prior therapies.

For additional information on Sunesis, please visit www.sunesis.com.

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This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements related to the continued development of vecabrutinib (SNS-062). Words such as "may," "intend," "will," "potential," "look forward," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon Sunesis' current expectations. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties. Sunesis' actual results and the timing of events could differ materially from those anticipated in such forward-looking statements as a result of these risks and uncertainties. These and other risk factors are discussed under "Risk Factors" in Sunesis' Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2019 and Sunesis' other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Sunesis expressly disclaims any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect any change in Sunesis' expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statements are based.

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