

Sunesis Presents Data Supporting SNS-032's Potential Anticancer Activity in Multiple Myeloma at the American Association for Cancer Research Meeting

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Results from Non-clinical Studies Confirm Mechanism of Action and Provide Guidance for Dosing

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, April 16, 2007 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNSS) presented non-clinical data demonstrating SNS-032's apoptotic activity in a multiple myeloma model. These data were presented today in a poster session during the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR).

SNS-032, a selective and potent inhibitor of cyclin-dependent kinases (CDKs) 2, 7 and 9, is currently in a Phase 1 clinical trial for B-cell malignancies, including chronic lymphocytic leukemia, multiple myeloma and mantle cell lymphoma. Non-clinical studies were conducted by Sunesis evaluating SNS-032's mechanism of action and in vitro activity against human multiple myeloma cell line RPMI-8226. Acting through inhibition of CDKs 2, 7, and 9, SNS-032 blocks both the cell cycle and transcription to drive apoptosis, or programmed cell death, in multiple myeloma cells upon exposure for six hours. Researchers also noted that exposure to SNS-032 induced down regulation of key anti-apoptotic factors, cell survival proteins, and growth factors that drive the disease. These results confirm that inhibiting CDKs 2, 7 and 9 targets both unregulated cell proliferation and the microenvironment associated with multiple myeloma and support the dosing regimen currently in use in the company's Phase 1 B-cell malignancy clinical trial.

"Data presented today from our non-clinical study of SNS-032 in multiple myeloma cell lines support our hypothesis that targeted inhibition of CDKs 2, 7 and 9 triggers cell death in hematologic cancer," said Daniel C. Adelman, M.D., Senior Vice President, Research and Development. "In addition, these results provide a pharmacologic basis for the dosing regimen being used in our Phase 1 clinical study, and identify potential biomarkers for monitoring activity."

Data were presented today as part of the Targeted Agents and Other Novel Therapies session in poster "SNS-032 is a potent and selective CDK 2, 7 and 9 inhibitor that drives apoptosis in the multiple myeloma cell line RPMI-8226" (Abstract #1815).

About SNS-032

SNS-032 is a potent and selective inhibitor of CDKs 2, 7 and 9, which are critical in the communication and relay of signals to promote cellular growth and function. CDK2 is involved in cellular proliferation by regulating the initiation of and progression through the DNA-synthesis phase of the cell cycle. CDK7 and CDK9 are involved in transcriptional regulation of certain proteins involved in cell survival. Inappropriate activity by these CDKs can lead to unregulated proliferation, avoidance of apoptosis and increased cell survival, all of which are hallmarks of cancer. By selectively targeting these CDKs, SNS-032 may halt both aberrant cell proliferation and induce apoptosis.

About Sunesis' Oncology Programs

Sunesis has built a rich portfolio of product candidates in oncology focused on novel pathways and targets, including inhibition of the cell cycle and survival signaling. Sunesis is currently conducting Phase 2 clinical trials in lung and ovarian cancer and a Phase 1 clinical trial in acute myeloid leukemia for its lead compound, SNS-595. SNS-032, Sunesis' CDK inhibitor compound, is being evaluated in Phase 1 clinical trials in B-cell malignancies and in advanced solid tumors. The company's Aurora kinase inhibitor, SNS-314 is expected to begin Phase 1 clinical trials in the first half of 2007. In addition, Sunesis is developing novel small molecule inhibitors of Raf kinase and other oncology kinases in collaboration with Biogen Idec.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery, development and commercialization of novel small molecule therapeutics for oncology and other serious diseases. Sunesis has built a broad product candidate portfolio through internal discovery and in-licensing of targeted cancer therapeutics. Sunesis is advancing its product candidates through in-house research and development efforts and strategic collaborations with leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies. For further information on Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, please visit <http://www.sunesis.com>.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release may contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. Sunesis may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations contained in such forward-looking statements. Actual results or events could differ materially from the plans, intentions and expectations contained in such forward-looking statements. Sunesis does not assume any obligation to update any such forward-looking statements.

SOURCE Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Investors: Eric Bjerkholt, SVP, Corporate Development & Finance, Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc., +1-650-266-3717; Media: Karen L. Bergman, +1-650-575-1509, or Michelle Corral, +1-415-794-8662, both of BCC Partners

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