

Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Announces Submission of a Marketing Authorization Application for Vosaroxin for the Treatment of Acute Myeloid Leukemia in Europe

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SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Dec. 8, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:SNSS) today announced that the company has submitted a Marketing Authorization Application (MAA) with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for Vosaroxin for the treatment of acute myeloid leukemia in patients aged 60 years and older. The application is subject to validation by the EMA, a process which typically takes one month, before the formal regulatory review of the application begins.

"Submission of an MAA for vosaroxin in relapsed refractory AML was our top priority in 2015. This milestone brings us closer to delivering a new option to a patient population which has seen little improvement in treatment standards in the last 40 years," said Daniel Swisher, Chief Executive Officer of Sunesis. "We believe the European market opportunity is significant, and look forward to providing updates on our progress with the application throughout 2016."

About QINPREZO™ (vosaroxin)

QINPREZO™ (vosaroxin) is an anti-cancer quinolone derivative (AQD), a class of compounds that has not been used previously for the treatment of cancer. Preclinical data demonstrate that vosaroxin both intercalates DNA and inhibits topoisomerase II, resulting in replication-dependent, site-selective DNA damage, G2 arrest and apoptosis. Both the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and European Commission have granted orphan drug designation to vosaroxin for the treatment of AML. Additionally, vosaroxin has been granted fast track designation by the FDA for the potential treatment of relapsed or refractory AML in combination with cytarabine. Vosaroxin is an investigational drug that has not been approved for use in any jurisdiction.

The trademark name QINPREZO is conditionally accepted by the FDA and the EMA as the proprietary name for the vosaroxin drug product candidate.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of new oncology therapeutics for the potential treatment of solid and hematologic cancers. Sunesis has built a highly experienced cancer drug development organization committed to advancing its lead product candidate, vosaroxin, in multiple indications to improve the lives of people with cancer.

For additional information on Sunesis, please visit <http://www.sunesis.com>.

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This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements related to Sunesis' expected progress in its kinase inhibitor pipeline. Words such as "may," "expect," "intends," "plan," "potential," "will" 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, which include, without limitation, the risk that Sunesis' clinical studies for its product candidates may not demonstrate safety or efficacy or lead to regulatory approval, the risk that data to date and trends may not be predictive of future data or results, risks related to the conduct of Sunesis' clinical trials, risks related to Sunesis' need for substantial additional funding to complete the development and commercialization of vosaroxin, and risks related to Sunesis' ability to raise the capital that it believes to be accessible and is required to fully finance the development and commercialization of vosaroxin. These and other risk factors are discussed under "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in Sunesis' Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2015. 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.

CONTACT: Investor and Media Inquiries:

David Pitts
Argot Partners
212-600-1902

Eric Bjerkholt
Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Inc.
650-266-3717

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