Sunesis Pharmaceuticals Announces Executive Promotions and Provides Clinical Update

July 8, 2019

300 mg Cohort of Phase 1b/2 Trial of Vecabrutinib now Enrolling

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., July 08, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sunesis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq: SNSS) today announced the promotion of Judy Fox, Ph.D. from Chief Scientific Officer, Senior Vice President to Chief Scientific Officer, Executive Vice President, Research & Development and the promotion of Parvinder (Par) S. Hyare from Vice President, Global Oncology Operations to Senior Vice President, Commercial.

“Judy and Par are accomplished leaders who have each made invaluable contributions to our programs, most recently with vecabrutinib. I am pleased to announce these well-deserved promotions, and we look forward to their continued leadership as we prepare for the next stage of our company’s growth,” said Dayton Misfeldt, Interim Chief Executive Officer of Sunesis. “We are seeing great momentum in our ongoing Phase 1b/2 trial towards determining the recommended dose for the Phase 2 expansion and are well prepared for the transition into this phase of the trial. We are targeting our next detailed clinical update at the annual American Society of Hematology meeting later this year.”

Dr. Fox rejoined Sunesis in 2017 as Chief Scientific Officer and program leader for vecabrutinib, with additional responsibility for much of the R&D organization including translational research and clinical development. She has contributed to the development of a number of promising and marketed therapeutics, and has held roles of increasing responsibility at companies including Genentech, Genencor, and Chiron/Novartis. Dr. Fox received her Ph.D. in Biological Chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and an A.B. in Chemistry from Bryn Mawr College.

Mr. Hyare joined Sunesis in July 2014 with extensive experience in leading commercial strategies and teams to provide pricing, reimbursement, access and sales for oncology and specialty products for companies such as AMAG Pharmaceuticals, Ortho Biotech, a division of Johnson & Johnson, and Merck. At Sunesis, Mr. Hyare has had responsibility for many areas including commercial planning, strategic marketing, medical affairs, and business development. Mr. Hyare holds a BS in Business Administration with a minor in chemistry from CSU Stanislaus.

The company also announced that it has completed the safety evaluation period for the 200 mg cohort of the ongoing Phase 1b/2 trial of its non-covalent BTK inhibitor vecabrutinib in adults with relapsed/refractory chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and other B-cell malignancies. To date, vecabrutinib has a favorable safety profile with no drug-related serious adverse events, supporting dose escalation to Cohort 5 (300 mg). This cohort is now open.

About Sunesis Pharmaceuticals

Sunesis is a biopharmaceutical company developing new targeted therapeutics 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. The company’s proprietary PDK1 inhibitor SNS-510 is in preclinical development. PDK1 is a master kinase that activates other kinases important to cell growth and survival including members of the AKT, PKC, RSK, and SGK families. Sunesis is exploring strategic alternatives for vosaroxin, a late-stage investigational product for relapsed or refractory AML. Sunesis also has an interest in the pan-RAF inhibitor TAK-580 which is licensed to Takeda. TAK-580 is in a clinical trial for pediatric low-grade glioma.

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

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements related to Sunesis’ continued development of vecabrutinib (SNS-062), including the timing and progress of the Phase 1b/2 trial of vecabrutinib, the therapeutic potential of vecabrutinib, and the further development and potential of its kinase inhibitor pipeline. Words such as “believe,” “expect,” “likely,” “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, which include, without limitation, the risk related to the timing or conduct of Sunesis' clinical trials, including the vecabrutinib Phase 1b/2 trial, the risk that Sunesis' clinical or preclinical studies for vecabrutinib, SNS-510 or any other product candidate 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, that Sunesis' development activities for vecabrutinib or SNS-510 could be otherwise halted or significantly delayed for various reasons, that Sunesis may not be able to receive regulatory approval of vecabrutinib, or SNS-510 in the U.S. or Europe, 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 vecabrutinib, SNS-510 and other product candidates. These and other risk factors are discussed under "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in Sunesis' Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 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 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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