



Aelix Therapeutics appoints Dr. Ian McGowan as Chief Medical Officer

HIV expert will support company in advancing therapeutic HIV vaccine to clinical proof-of-concept

Barcelona, Spain, April 5, 2017 - Aelix Therapeutics, a drug development company specialized in the discovery and development of immunotherapies against HIV infection, today announces the appointment of Dr. Ian McGowan as Chief Medical Officer (CMO), effective March 1, 2017.

Aelix Therapeutics' lead candidate is the HTI immunogen; its design is based on the observation that T-cell responses to certain HIV regions are enriched in individuals with a non-progressor clinical phenotype. It brings these regions together as a vaccine immunogen. Clinical trial supplies of the HTI vaccine have been prepared; the company aims to initiate a first in human phase 1/2 study by mid-2017.

"We are delighted Dr. McGowan has joined our company as CMO," said Dr. Christian Brander, Chief Scientific Officer and Co-founder of Aelix Therapeutics. "We have been working with him as a consultant since 2016. We believe that his extensive knowledge in the antiviral field, especially in antiretroviral drug development, combined with his regulatory experience and large network will help us further our research on the HTI immunogen."

"Research into novel cure/eradication strategies for HIV infection is gathering significant momentum. I believe that the HTI immunogen has great potential to be a pivotal component in these strategies," said Dr. McGowan. "I am delighted to be able to contribute to the work in advancing the HTI immunogen towards the clinical proof-of-concept stage."

Dr. McGowan will continue to hold a part-time appointment as Professor of Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where he leads a translational research program focused on the development of novel antiretroviral agents for HIV prevention.

Dr. McGowan previously served as a Principal Investigator of the Microbicide Trials Network (MTN), which focuses on developing topical products for the prevention of HIV infection. He currently leads MTN's rectal microbicide program, which is based at the University of Pittsburgh. Earlier in his career, he gained in-depth knowledge about drug development, especially antiretroviral therapy, in both academia and commercial organizations. Dr. McGowan also has extensive knowledge of regulatory issues related to drug development and previously served as Chair of the FDA Antiviral Drugs Advisory Committee.

During his career, Dr. McGowan has worked as a consultant with several major organizations, such as the WHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Dr. McGowan has authored more than one hundred peer reviewed papers as well as books and book chapters.

Dr. McGowan is also journal reviewer at several major life science publications, including the *Journal of Virology*. He serves on the editorial board of the journal *Sexually*



Transmitted Infections. He has a DPhil in Immunology from Oxford University, an MD from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and is a fellow at the Royal College of Physicians.

About the HTI immunogen

The HTI immunogen was discovered by Dr. Christian Brander, CSO of Aelix Therapeutics. It is based on the observation that T-cell responses to certain HIV regions are enriched in individuals with a non-progressor clinical phenotype. The HTI immunogen brings these regions together as a vaccine immunogen. The HTI sequence design is driven by functional immune data from close to 1,000 individuals from four different cohorts on three continents (Mothe *et al.* 2011). It does not rely on assumptions as to the importance of sequence conservation, density of HLA binding motifs or gene expression levels. The predictive power of HTI directed T-cell responses on virus control *in vivo* has been validated in unrelated cohorts and through sub-studies in samples from earlier vaccine trials including the STEP trial. Preclinical data shows that immunization with HTI in mice and macaques elicits strong and broad T-cell responses associated with HIV-1 control (Mothe *et al.* 2015).

About Aelix Therapeutics

Aelix Therapeutics is a biotechnology company based in Barcelona, Spain. It is focused on the development of a therapeutic HIV vaccine to be used as part of a cure/eradication strategy. Aelix Therapeutics is a spin-off of HIVACAT, a Catalan public-private consortium conducting cutting-edge research in this field. The company was incorporated in November 2015 and completed a €11.5M (\$12.5M) Series A funding shortly thereafter.

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