

Kite Pharma Expands Its Research and Development Collaboration With the National Cancer Institute to Develop a Next Generation of Cancer Immunotherapy Products for Solid Tumors

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-Focus on T Cell Response to Tumor-Specific Mutations-

-Expansion of TCR and CAR Product Pipeline-

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Feb. 27, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Kite Pharma, Inc., (Nasdaq:KITE), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on developing engineered autologous T cell therapy (eACT™) products for the treatment of cancer, today announced that the Company has amended its Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The amendment will encompass emerging areas of research in the immune response to tumor neo-antigens, truly tumor-specific antigens generated as tumors accumulate genetic mutations. In addition, new T cell receptor (TCR) and new chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) product candidates targeting solid tumors have been added to the collaboration. The amendment broadens Kite's ongoing research collaboration with the Surgery Branch at the NCI, led by Steven A. Rosenberg, M.D., Ph.D. and provides additional product candidates for Kite's growing pipeline.

"Neo-antigen immunotherapy will allow us to design a cancer treatment that can modify a patient's T cells to recognize the unique genetic profile of the patient's own tumor. This offers a new paradigm in cancer care and extends the significant progress we have achieved in collaboration with Dr. Steven Rosenberg, Chief of Surgery, and his clinical research teams at the NCI," said Arie Belldegrun, M.D., FACS, Kite Pharma's President and Chief Executive Officer.

Under Kite's amended agreement with the NCI, the additional programs will encompass:

- Methods of rapidly identifying and developing TCR product candidates targeted against neo-antigens.
- Optimizing new methods to manufacture this new class of individualized therapies.
- Developing additional TCR product candidates retrovirally engineered to target tumor antigens, including for the treatment of colorectal and lung cancers.

David Chang, M.D., Ph.D., Kite Pharma's Executive Vice President, Research and Development, and Chief Medical Officer, commented, "This year, we have substantially broadened our plan and vision for clinical development, engaging in a strategic R&D collaboration with Amgen, combining their cancer targets with our T cell platform technology, as well as expanding our agreement with Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center to develop novel approaches to CAR T cell therapy. The new research under our CRADA with the NCI further extends our clinical programs, particularly in regard to new TCR approaches. We are deeply committed to the rapid advancement of these programs for the benefit of patients."

About Kite Pharma

Kite Pharma, Inc., is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company engaged in the development of novel cancer immunotherapy products, with a primary focus on eACT™ designed to restore the immune system's ability to recognize and eradicate tumors. Kite is based in Santa Monica, CA. For more information on Kite Pharma, please visit www.kitepharma.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements for purposes of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. We may, in some cases, use terms such as "predicts," "believes," "potential," "proposed," "continue," "estimates," "anticipates," "expects," "plans," "intends," "may," "could," "might," "will," "should" or other

words that convey uncertainty of future events or outcomes to identify these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding our intentions, beliefs, projections, outlook, analyses or current expectations concerning, among other things: the ability of our collaborator to develop and advance T cell therapy, including the next generation of T cell therapy. Various factors may cause differences between Kite's expectations and actual results as discussed in greater detail in Kite's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including without limitation in its Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2014. Any forward-looking statements that we make in this press release speak only as of the date of this press release. We assume no obligation to update our forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, after the date of this press release.

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