Kite Pharma Presents Clinical Biomarker Results in Patients Treated With Anti-CD19 Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-Cell Therapy at the 2015 ASCO Annual Meeting

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SANTA MONICA, Calif., June 2, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Kite Pharma, Inc., (Nasdaq:KITE), today announced clinical biomarker data from patients with relapsed/refractory B cell malignancies treated with anti-CD19 chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy in a poster presentation during the 51st Annual Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), which is taking place in Chicago. In an ongoing Phase 1 clinical trial at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), being conducted under a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) between Kite Pharma and the NCI, patients with diverse B cell tumors are conditioned with cyclophosphamide and fludarabine, then dosed with their own T cells genetically modified to express a CAR designed to target the antigen CD19, a protein expressed on the cell surface of B-cell lymphomas and leukemias. As reported at last year's ASCO meeting, 76% of evaluable patients (N=29) achieved an overall response rate in this study. In this updated biomarker analysis, conditioning chemotherapy was associated with a significant rise in homeostatic cytokines and chemokines, which could favor expansion, activation, and trafficking of CAR T cells. In addition, the recovery of B cells was seen in 7 of 12 patients with ongoing response duration greater than 12 months.

David Chang, M.D., Ph.D., Kite Pharma's Executive Vice President, Research and Development, and Chief Medical Officer, and an author on the poster, commented, "The results being reported at ASCO provide additional key insights and further deepen our understanding of CAR T-cell therapy. We will continue to investigate biomarkers that may predict the clinical outcome in our ongoing KTE-C19 (anti-CD19 CAR T) clinical program which initiated patient dosing last month."

The ASCO meeting poster, titled "Biomarker Analysis of Patients Treated with Anti-CD19 Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T Cells" (Abstract # 3028), is available on the Kite Pharma website at http://www.kitepharma.com/c/news/publications.php. Further information on the NCI clinical trial protocols can be found at ClinicalTrials.gov, using Identifier NCT: 00924326.

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 engineered autologous T-cell therapy (eACT™) designed to restore the immune system's ability to recognize and eradicate tumors. Kite is based in Santa Monica, CA.

Cautionary Note on 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. Kite 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 Kite's intentions, beliefs, projections, outlook, analyses or current expectations concerning, among other things: the success of the NCI's clinical trials and Kite's KTE-C19 clinical program. Various factors may cause differences between Kite's expectations and actual results as discussed in greater detail under the heading "Risk Factors" in the Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2015. Any forward-looking statements that Kite makes in this press release speak only as of the date of this press release. Kite assumes no obligation to update its 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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