

First awards made by London Genetics' Proof-of-Concept Fund

London, UK, 24 February 2010 – London Genetics Limited, an expert in the use of pharmacogenetics in clinical drug discovery and development, has awarded the first three grants from its proof-of-concept (POC) fund. The awards, to teams at Imperial College London and University College London, are for research in the areas of immunotherapy, schizophrenia and heart disease. Financial details were not disclosed.

The purpose of projects funded by the POC fund is to illustrate the value the genetic data and resources within LGL's seven academic founding partners can add to drug discovery and clinical development. Typical funded projects are expected to involve:

- Identification of disease genes and/or signalling pathways for use in target selection or drug reprofiling; or
- Characterisation of disease genes or signalling pathways to inform risk management strategies, define patient criteria for inclusion in studies and stratified clinical study designs; or
- Identification of potential markers of medicine efficacy and/or safety response.

Any intellectual property generated is expected to be retained by the institution, with a return to London Genetics upon its exploitation. The company's founding partners are all academic and medical centres with significant clinical and genetic expertise.

The immunotherapy project will investigate genetic regulation of production of natural killer cells, which are involved in protection against diseases from cancer to malaria. The second team will be involved in identifying and validating gene variants associated with the weight gain that often occurs in patients taking atypical antipsychotics for the treatment of schizophrenia. The cardiovascular project will look at drug target validation by using gene variants as a model of target modification.

Dominique Kleyn, CEO of London Genetics, said, 'We are delighted to be making these proof-of-concept awards which should provide further validation of our business model, and highlight our links with first-class academic teams. The biopharmaceutical industry is realising the potential of pharmacogenetics in helping it meet the myriad of challenges it faces, as we discuss in a recent MedNous commentary¹.'

For further information or to meet us at conferences please contact:

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¹ Why Pharmacogenetics is important to Pharma. MedNous January 2010 Volume 4 No 1 p 3

Notes to Editors:

About London Genetics

London Genetics Limited, a not-for-profit company, is an expert in the use of pharmacogenetics in clinical drug discovery and development. Established in 2007 with funding from the London Development Agency, its seven founding partners are leading London academic and medical institutions with clinical and genetic expertise and significant patient resources.

The company provides pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies with access to this expertise and resource, as well as providing strategic advice on the application of pharmacogenetics for successful drug development. LGL has broad therapeutic expertise with a focus on cardiovascular disease and drug side-effects of a cardiovascular nature. Recent agreements developed by London Genetics include a collaboration between the International Serious Adverse Events Consortium, St George's University of London and the Drug Safety Research Unit at Southampton, UK. The parties are working on genetic markers for drug-induced cardiac arrhythmia. LGL is based at the Imperial College Incubator in London, and has ISO 9001 accreditation.

For further information, please go to www.londongeneticslimited.com

About pharmacogenetics

Genetic differences between individuals mean that drug response rates are often variable across a population, and this has significant implications for healthcare cost effectiveness. Pharmacogenetics, the study of the clinical consequences of genetic differences in the way people metabolise and respond to drugs, is expected to generate better understanding of how drugs work in the body, and therefore give insight into how to develop more efficacious and safer drugs.

It also has implications for product life cycle management and the revitalisation of drugs which previously failed in clinical trials. With drug development costs rising and R&D productivity falling, plus increased regulator focus on safety and cost-effectiveness, pharmacogenetics is expected to become increasingly important in drug development. The FDA and the EMEA have recognised this in their Critical Path Initiative and Road Map respectively.