

## **BENITEC EXECUTES LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH CIRCUIT THERAPEUTICS FOR PAIN; PROVIDES TT-034 TRIAL COMMENTARY**

**Sydney Australia, 3 November 2014: ddRNAi therapeutics company Benitec Biopharma Limited (ASX: BLT, OTC: BTEBY)** is pleased to announce the execution of an exclusive licensing agreement with US-based biotech company Circuit Therapeutics (Circuit) for the use of Benitec's ddRNAi technology in the area of intractable pain. Intractable pain is a severe and constant pain which is not curable using current therapies. It causes adverse biologic affects for sufferers, and untreated, can lead to death.

The licensing agreement covers the application of ddRNAi to target the inhibition of a Nav1.7, a sodium channel that is exclusively produced in certain sensory nerves and is critical for generation of pain. Licensing ddRNAi technology will enable Circuit to use Benitec's novel gene silencing therapy to block Nav1.7 in particular neurons that control pain without the anticipated side effects of less specific and/or less targeted therapies.

Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Benitec Biopharma, Dr Peter French, commented, "We are very pleased to license ddRNAi to Circuit for these pain applications. We believe that ddRNAi can provide a unique solution to chronic intractable pain, and as we are focusing internally on our hepatitis C, hepatitis B, non-small cell lung cancer and age-related macular degeneration programs, this license allows us to advance the pain therapeutic potential of ddRNAi without taking resources from our other key programs. Success in this program will have implications for other forms of neuropathic pain, including cancer pain."

Dr Fred Moll, Chairman of Circuit Therapeutics, commented, "A major focus for Circuit has been the development of novel, gene-based therapies to treat intractable pain. Accessing Benitec's ddRNAi approach, we believe, will enable the advancement of our programs targeting the Nav1.7 sodium ion channel".

The terms of this license are commercial in confidence, however, they are broadly in line with previous license agreements, and are within expected guidelines for biotech initiatives in the early stage of development.

Discussions with other potential licensing partners are ongoing, with the expectation of further progressing Benitec Biopharma's technology in a range of other serious chronic diseases with unmet needs.

### **Response to questions received on TT034 trial progress.**

Benitec Biopharma has received a number of questions regarding one of the exclusion criteria in the Company's Phase I/II(a) Clinical Trial for Hepatitis C.

The questions relate to the prevalence of neutralising antibodies to the AAV8 vector in patients being screened for recruitment in the Company's TT034 trial.



Benitec notes that neutralising antibodies have not been a major factor in the delays associated with dosing the second patient in the current clinical trial.

It is important to note that previous exposure to AAV vectors, which causes production of neutralising antibodies, is only one of many exclusion criteria under the TT-034 trial, and is not something that is expected to be material to the commercial prospects for TT034 upon entry to the market.

The Company wishes to reiterate that the criteria for trial inclusion are designed to ensure the safety and welfare of the trial subjects for TT-034, remembering that this is a first in man, non-withdrawable treatment.

Although the inclusion criteria for this Phase I/II(a) trial are appropriately strict due to the non-withdrawable nature of TT-034, once a suitable safety profile has been established for the therapeutic, many of the trial exclusion parameters will be relaxed, enabling the treatment of much larger groups of patients.

### **Interview with Dr Peter French on Circuit licensing agreement and TT-034 trial**

Investors are invited to listen to an audio interview where Dr Peter French discusses the licensing agreement with Circuit Therapeutics and responds to recent shareholder interest in the progress of Benitec's TT-034 trial for Hepatitis C. To listen to the interview, please copy and paste the following link into your browser: <http://www.brrmedia.com/event/129281>

For further information regarding Benitec and its activities, please contact the persons below, or visit the Benitec website at [www.benitec.com](http://www.benitec.com)

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#### **About Benitec Biopharma Limited:**

Benitec Biopharma Limited is an ASX-listed biotechnology company (ASX:BLT; OTC: BTEBY) which has developed a patented gene-silencing technology called ddRNAi or 'expressed RNAi'. Based in Sydney, Australia with labs in Hayward CA (USA) and collaborators and licensees around the world, the company is developing ddRNAi-based therapeutics for chronic and life-threatening human conditions including Hepatitis C and B, drug resistant lung cancer and wet Age-related Macular Degeneration. Benitec has also licensed ddRNAi to other biopharmaceutical companies for applications including HIV/AIDS and retinitis pigmentosa. For more information visit [www.benitec.com](http://www.benitec.com).

#### **About Circuit Therapeutics**

Circuit Therapeutics is a privately held discovery stage biotechnology company based in Menlo Park, California. The company's cutting edge technologies focused on neural circuits are being applied to enable new ways of drug discovery and development of direct therapeutic interventions across a broad range of indications.