Akrevia Therapeutics Licenses Exclusive Rights from City of Hope to Expand Development Pipeline of Potent, Tumor Targeted Immunotherapies

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'Switchblade' technology provides unique, proprietary approach to engineer cytokines and other potent immune modulators to activate only in the tumor microenvironment

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. and DUARTE, Calif., March 26, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Akrevia Therapeutics, a privately held biopharmaceutical company focused on developing highly-potent, tumor-targeted immuno-oncology therapeutics, and City of Hope, an independent research and treatment center for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases, today announced that they have entered into an exclusive licensing agreement that will allow Akrevia to utilize innovative technology to engineer potent immune-activating cytokines that can be selectively activated in the tumor microenvironment.

City of Hope

Akrevia Logo

The tumor microenvironment has distinct physiological characteristics that can be exploited to help develop tools to deliver therapies that are more precise and potent than existing treatments. The new technology, licensed from the lab of John Williams, Ph.D., at City of Hope, is suited to a broad spectrum of cytokines – molecules for which current tumor activation approaches are not applicable. This novel Switchblade™ allows inactivated proteins to "flick open" at the point of attack, releasing potent anti-tumor agents precisely where they are needed, thus maximizing efficacy and minimizing the peripheral side effects that limit current cytokine therapies. This new platform can be applied to other highly potent biologic architectures, including diverse cytokine family members, chemokines and agonistic immune modulators which to date have proved intractable in clinical development. This new technology will augment Akrevia's existing Aklusion platform technologies, and augments the existing technology previously licensed from City of Hope.

"Cytokines have immense promise as highly potent cancer immunotherapeutics, with well-understood biology – but their extreme potency and lack of tumor targeting have thwarted attempts to exploit this clinically," said Tim Clackson, Ph.D., president and executive vice president, R&D, Akrevia Therapeutics. "The new technology licensed from City of Hope will substantially complement our current platform portfolio, providing the ability to target tumor activation of the full range of potent, immune-stimulating molecules. Akrevia will use the newly licensed technology to aggressively advance our pipeline and build towards the next generation of targeted cancer treatments."

Under the agreement, Akrevia gains exclusive commercial rights for application of the technology to the development of proprietary products. City of Hope, internationally recognized for pioneering technology that enabled the creation of numerous breakthrough cancer drugs, developed this technology to help investigators and researchers shield their selected antibodies for targeted therapies and to improve drug delivery. The nonprofit institution is working to improve precision medicine for all patients.

"At City of Hope, our research teams focus on rapidly developing technologies that can quickly move from laboratory research to clinical treatment," said Williams, professor of Molecular Medicine, City of Hope. "Our team has developed a novel approach to unlock the potential of multiple important immuno-oncology mechanisms to deliver potent, targeted agents to patients. We look forward to our continued collaboration with Akrevia to harness the therapeutic potential of this technology with the goal of improving treatment for patients."

About Akrevia Therapeutics
Akrevia Therapeutics, LLC is a privately-held biopharmaceutical company focused on developing highly-potent, targeted immuno-oncology therapeutics. The company's proprietary Aklusion platform technology allows biologics to be specifically activated in the tumor microenvironment, and with precisely tailored properties, expanding the universe of immune-activating proteins that can be safely delivered. Akrevia is applying its technology to build a broad pipeline of engineered cytokines, antibodies and other immune modulators as potential new options for patients living with cancer. To learn more, please visit www.akrevia.com.

About City of Hope
City of Hope is an independent biomedical research and treatment center for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases. Founded in 1913, City of Hope is a leader in bone marrow transplantation and immunotherapy such as CAR T cell therapy. City of Hope's translational research and personalized treatment protocols advance care throughout the world. Human synthetic insulin and numerous breakthrough cancer drugs are based on technology developed at the institution. A National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center and a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, City of Hope is ranked one of America's "Best Hospitals" in cancer by *U.S. News & World Report*. Its main campus is located near Los Angeles, with additional locations throughout Southern California. For more information about City of Hope, follow us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram.

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