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IWT supports reMYND in developing a cure for Type 1 Diabetes

reMYND NV today announced that it has received a grant from IWT, the Flemish agency for Innovation by Science and Technology, to assess the potential of its Diabetes program in curing Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus (T1DM).

reMYND develops disease-modifying treatment for patients suffering from protein-misfolding disorders such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and Huntington's. With ample support from IWT over the last years, reMYND's diabetes program has demonstrated not only to halt the further degeneration of the pancreas in animal models of T2DM, but even to improve the own natural insulin production by β-cells in pancreatic islets. In addition, the treatment has shown to protect human islets in a test tube against toxic stress. While T2DM, also called adult onset diabetes, is caused by a combination of increased insulin resistance and decreased insulin production, T1DM is specifically caused by decreased insulin production as the β-cells in the pancreas are being attacked and die, typically at a young age. Hence, the data obtained in T2DM models and human islets suggest that reMYND's diabetes treatment might be able to cure T1DM, provided the intervention comes early enough. reMYND will now embark on a project to assess such potential in animal models of T1DM with the financial support from IWT.

Commenting on the grant, *Gerard Griffioen, CSO of reMYND said*: "For a company like ours, it is important to embark on new avenues. It is great to see how IWT remains supportive to facilitate innovation at the early stage after which we can bring drug development programs forward by our own means or through the more classical funding channels."

Tine Hectors, Project-leader Diabetes at reMYND added: "Currently, patients with T1DM are dependent upon administering external insulin several times a day from an early age on. We feel we could make a major difference to those patients if we could restore their own insulin production, even if we still have a long way to go before we can translate any positive data we might find into clinical practice."

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About Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus

Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus (T1DM) is an autoimmune disorder in which the degeneration and destruction of β-cells in the islets of Langerhans results in impaired insulin production and consequently impaired control of glucose levels in blood. Whereas T2DM is usually associated with age- and obesity-dependent development of insulin resistance, T1DM mostly starts in young people in which an autoimmune response against β-cells entails the predominant mechanism, setting-off a pathological cascade leading to β-cell destruction. Causes or triggers of T1DM onset are still elusive and may involve certain infections or are of nutritional and/or chemical origin which precipitate into T1DM within the context of a certain genetic make-up. The prevalence of T1DM for residents of the US (0-19 years) is 1.7‰ and is rising by as much as 5.3% annually. Similar trends of increasing incidence are observed in other parts of the world including Europe. Current T1DM treatments essentially involve insulin replacement to suppress effectively disease-symptoms but are not preserving or restoring functional β-cell mass which would fundamentally alter the course of the pathogenesis and would provide an improvement of the patients' quality of life.

About Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus

Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) is a chronic metabolic disorder resulting from a failure to appropriately manage blood glucose levels. The prevalence of T2DM in the seven major markets is about 8.5% (about 10 times higher than the 0.9% prevalence of Alzheimer's disease and 40 times higher than Parkinson's). T2DM is estimated to affect about 150 million people worldwide and is expected to increase rapidly in the future, with an anticipated doubling by 2025. Although T2DM is age-related, over the past decades a remarkably strong decrease in age of onset has been observed, likely attributable to changes in lifestyle and diet in Western countries. These evolutions, which are also manifesting itself in developing regions such as the highly populated BRIC countries, together with an increased ageing population, are major causes for the expected rise in T2DM incidence and illustrate a huge medical need and an enormous challenge for society. At present only symptomatic treatments are available for T2DM, none of which alter the course of ongoing degeneration of the insulin-producing β-cells fundamentally.

Therefore developing innovative disease-modifying treatments with the potential to decelerate or perhaps even reverse symptoms entails a current challenge of reMYND, creating a unique opportunity to address important medical needs and societal challenges while securing an important economic value in Flanders.

About reMYND

reMYND NV, founded in 2002 as a spin-off from the University of Leuven, drives the development of disease-modifying treatments against Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Diabetes and other orphan protein misfolding disorders. reMYND is organised along two independently managed business units, the Contract Research Organization (CRO) and the own Drug Discovery & Development unit:

- The in-vivo Contract Research Organization (CRO) helps its clients assess the pharmacokinetics and -dynamics of their experimental treatments against Alzheimer's disease in reMYND's proprietary Alzheimer mouse models. Its mission is to be a strategic partner for its clients and help them identify the most promising set-up to assess potential effects. Given the extensive experience fully focused on Alzheimer's, reMYND's CRO can contribute its expertise for every type of Alzheimer treatment in any form of application. The CRO is serving 6 of the Top 10 pharmaco's worldwide and its client-base covers the US, Europe and Japan. The CRO has provided in-vivo proof-of-concept data for several candidate drugs that reMYND's clients have currently in clinical development.

- reMYND's own Drug Discovery & Development unit focuses entirely on disease-modifying treatments with the aim to decelerate – or even reverse – cellular degeneration found in protein misfolding disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease (AD), Parkinson's disease (PD), type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and several orphan diseases. As such, reMYND responds to a clear unmet medical need, as all marketed treatments and the majority of the products under development world-wide are aimed mainly to mitigate symptoms.
  reMYND's pipeline primarily consists of 4 disease-modifying programs counteracting tau-toxicity for AD, 2 programs for T2DM, and 2 counteracting synuclein-toxicity for PD, with recent additions in orphan diseases.

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For more information, see: www.remynd.com

About FlandersBio

FlandersBio supports the release of biotech news, to inform the media about the press releases of its members, active in the sector.

FlandersBio is the umbrella organisation for the Life Sciences sector in Flanders, a dynamic non-profit, fee based organisation with 210 members. Our mission is to support and facilitate the sector's sustained development. Our objective is to ensure that it remains a strong driver of economic growth in the region. The FlandersBio network brings together companies with innovative, R&D-driven activities in the life sciences – companies that are for example developing biopharmaceuticals, medical technologies or agricultural or industrial biotech products. Our network welcomes companies with production activities based in Flanders as well as academic research institutes and providers of capital, services and technologies to the life sciences community.