

Healthcare industry BW

Phenex receives 100 M USD Milestone Payment from Gilead

Phenex Pharmaceuticals AG (Phenex) today announced that the company has received a 100 M USD milestone payment from Gilead Sciences, Inc. of Foster City, CA, U.S.A. for its program with GS-9674 targeting nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH).

GS-9674 is a novel, synthetic and non-steroidal FXR agonist which was originally developed by Phenex and then sold to Gilead. In December 2014, Gilead acquired the Farnesoid X Receptor (FXR) program from Phenex, in a deal valued at 470 million USD. GS-9674 is the clinical drug candidate that Gilead has elected to test in patients with liver diseases such as NASH, primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) and primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC). GS-9674 is now being evaluated for its safety and efficacy in Phase 2 studies in all three indications (see clinicaltrials.gov study identifiers NCT02854605, NCT02943447, NCT02943460).

Dr. Claus Kremoser, CEO of Phenex, comments: "When we signed this FXR deal with Gilead at the end of 2014 we could only hope that one day a molecule from our labs would be elected by Gilead as a clinical development candidate. At that time it was an ambitious aspiration which has now become reality. We are very pleased that Gilead has fully embraced our FXR agonist program and wish them success for the outcome of these studies. GS-9674 is now in the best hands to be further developed in these indications with high unmet medical needs."

Thomas Hoffmann, CFO of Phenex, adds: "This milestone payment is in addition to a further undisclosed milestone from the same program earlier this year for GS-9674 entering Phase 1 studies. For the last three years, Phenex shows high profitability. With our outstandingly strong cash position now, we can strategically invest in novel drug discovery programs. It allows us to build up a drug discovery platform in liver and gastrointestinal diseases as well as in oncology where we can afford to evaluate radical novel innovative and promising approaches."

Claus Kremoser continues: "Our ambition is it to use these proceeds to build up a pipeline of potentially game changing new drugs in the liver/GI field, as well as in cancer. Our next big goal is to take a drug all the way from research to approval and marketing. We are now in an excellent position to reach this goal with some certainty."

About Phenex Pharmaceuticals AG:

Phenex is a privately held drug discovery and development company headquartered in Ludwigshafen with a research site in Heidelberg. The biopharmaceutical company can now build on fourteen years of expertise in exploring and defining innovative, potent and selective new drug candidates from small molecules. Phenex's R&D activities are centered around diseases of liver/gastrointestinal tract, inflammation/autoimmune as well as cancer. It is the company's goal to partner and outlicense drug programs in areas with major market potential to global players from the biopharmaceutical industry while pursuing its own drug development in niche areas with particular high medical needs.