



Former Naurex Team Launches New Spin-Out Company, Aptinyx

September 16, 2015

Preclinical NMDA Receptor Modulators and Discovery Platform Spun Out of Naurex upon Close of Acquisition by Allergan

New Company Funded with Robust Seed Financing to Support IND-Enabling Activities for Lead Preclinical Assets

Evanston, Ill., September 16, 2015 – Aptinyx Inc., a biopharmaceutical company advancing modulators of the N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptor for the treatment of challenging disorders of the brain and nervous system, has launched with the discovery platform and preclinical pipeline spun out of Naurex upon the close of its acquisition by Allergan in August 2015.

“As we close the last chapter in the story of Naurex, we are excited to begin anew with Aptinyx and continue our work addressing unmet needs in central nervous system disorders,” said Norbert Riedel, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Aptinyx. “Our company launches with significant seed financing to support advancement of our preclinical development programs, an experienced and talented team, and a high-potential research collaboration with Allergan. We look forward to building upon our track record of innovation and value creation with our new company.”

Corporate Focus

Aptinyx has initiated IND-enabling studies for lead candidates stemming from its robust pipeline of small-molecule, orally bioavailable NMDA receptor modulators. The company plans to identify and develop therapeutic candidates that demonstrate differentiated benefits in challenging brain and nervous system disorders, such as traumatic brain injury, neuropathic pain, post-traumatic stress disorder, and epilepsy.

Aptinyx’s therapeutics are designed to enhance synaptic plasticity, or strengthen the network for neural cell communication, a pathway that underlies multiple nervous system conditions. Therapeutics that modulate NMDA receptors – rather than shut them down – are both highly effective and well tolerated. The platform was developed based on research from the laboratory of Joseph Moskal, Ph.D., distinguished professor of biomedical engineering at Northwestern University, director of the university’s Falk Center for Molecular Therapeutics, founder of Naurex, and chief scientific officer of Aptinyx.

“Throughout my research, I have seen that NMDA receptor modulators have great therapeutic potential in neurology and psychiatry and we confirmed this potential with the positive results that we saw with the Naurex clinical programs in depression,” said Dr. Moskal. “At Aptinyx, our team will explore additional CNS indications with the next-generation of NMDA receptor modulators – developing our independent pipeline and collaborative research programs.”

Research Collaboration

Aptinyx will collaborate with Allergan on the discovery and preclinical development of innovative, orally bioavailable, small-molecule NMDA receptor modulators for the treatment of certain psychiatric and neurologic disorders. Allergan receives the right to in-license a select number of compounds discovered and profiled during the term of the collaboration for certain target indications.

Management Team

Dr. Riedel was president and CEO of Naurex and remains at the helm of the new spin-out company, Aptinyx. Prior to joining Naurex in January 2014, he was corporate vice president and chief science and innovation officer at Baxter International.

Dr. Moskal founded Naurex and served as its chief scientific officer. He continues in that role at Aptinyx.

Aptinyx has appointed Ashish Khanna to the position of chief business officer. Mr. Khanna was vice president of corporate development at Naurex and managed the company’s financing and transaction efforts, culminating in the acquisition by Allergan.

Aptinyx has also appointed Torsten Madsen, M.D., Ph.D., as its new chief medical officer. Dr. Madsen recently joined Naurex after serving as an observer on the company’s board of directors. He previously held numerous positions at H. Lundbeck A/S, including chief medical officer and vice president of U.S. drug development and divisional director of international clinical research in mood and anxiety disorders.

The Aptinyx management team also includes:

- Patricia Adams, vice president of human resources and administration;
- David Houck, Ph.D., vice president of drug development operations and quality; and
- M. Amin Khan, Ph.D., vice president of chemistry R&D.

Board of Directors

Aptinyx has appointed a board of directors comprising representatives of the funds and life sciences companies that were investors in Naurex. The board is led by chairman Wilbur Gantz III, president of PathoCapital, LLC. Mr. Gantz was formerly executive chairman and CEO of Ovation Pharmaceuticals, which was acquired by Lundbeck in 2009. Earlier, he served as chairman, CEO, and president of PathoGenesis, a biopharmaceutical company acquired by Chiron in 2001.

Additional board members include:

- Terry Gould, partner and head of venture/growth equity investments at Adams Street Partners;
- Geeta Vemuri, Ph.D., managing partner at Baxalta Ventures;
- Kenneth Widder, M.D., partner at LVP Life Science Ventures; and
- Dr. Riedel.

About Aptinyx

Aptinyx Inc. is a biopharmaceutical company focused on discovery and development of transformative therapies for challenging disorders of the brain and nervous system. Aptinyx has a proven platform for discovering compounds that enhance synaptic plasticity, or strengthen the network for neural cell communication. Molecules discovered by Aptinyx achieve this through a novel mechanism that modulates NMDA receptors, resulting in drugs that are both highly effective and well tolerated. This mechanism has applicability across a number of brain and nervous system disorders. Aptinyx is rapidly advancing promising drug candidates into clinical development for indications with high unmet medical need. For more information, visit www.aptinyx.com.