Genzyme and Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Therapeutics Announce Collaboration to Discover New CF Drugs

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New effort will search for potential therapies targeting the most common mutation of cystic fibrosis

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. & BETHESDA, Md.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Genzyme, a Sanofi company (EURONEXT: SAN and NYSE: SNY), and Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Therapeutics Inc., the nonprofit affiliate of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, today announced a research agreement to support the discovery of new drugs to treat people with the most common mutation found in patients with CF, Delta F508.

People with cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease, experience a cascade of symptoms that can lead to life-threatening lung infections and premature death.

The program's focus is to identify compounds known as “correctors,” which may aid in the ability of the malfunctioning CFTR protein found in CF patients to operate correctly. In the Delta F508 mutation, the CFTR protein does not move to its proper place at the cell surface, impeding the flow of fluids into the airways. Nearly 90 percent of people with CF have at least one copy of the Delta F508 mutation.

In this collaboration, researchers will evaluate different compound libraries for correctors for Delta F508, and will take advantage of the vast compound libraries of both Genzyme and Sanofi. The research will take place throughout several Genzyme and Sanofi R&D facilities globally. Genzyme brings to the collaboration more than 20 years’ experience exploring treatments for people living with CF. The company’s efforts have ranged from improved molecular diagnostics to clinical trials with a gene therapy, and have included past collaboration with the CF Foundation in the area of drug discovery.

““We are delighted to enter into a research collaboration with Genzyme, a company that has long dedicated itself to improving the lives of people with rare diseases,” said Robert J. Beall, Ph.D., president and CEO of the CF Foundation. “Genzyme's capabilities and resources will help the CF Foundation accelerate its effort to find drugs to treat the most common mutation in CF and have the greatest impact on those with this disease.”

“While there has been great momentum recently in cystic fibrosis research, there is still great unmet need,” said Genzyme's president and CEO David Meeker, MD. “Together with the CF Foundation, we look forward to working to accelerate the pace of discovery on behalf of CF patients around the world.”

About the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is the world’s leader in the search for a cure for cystic fibrosis. The Foundation funds more CF research than any other organization, and nearly every CF drug available today was made possible because of Foundation support. Based in Bethesda, Md., the Foundation also supports and accredits a national care center network that has been recognized by the National Institutes of Health as a model of care for a chronic disease. The CF Foundation is a donor-supported nonprofit organization. For more information, go to www.cff.org.

About Genzyme, a Sanofi Company

Genzyme has pioneered the development and delivery of transformative therapies for patients affected by rare and debilitating diseases for over 30 years. We accomplish our goals through world-class research and with the compassion and commitment of our employees. With a focus on rare diseases and multiple sclerosis, we are dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of the patients and families we serve. That goal guides and inspires us every day. Genzyme’s portfolio of transformative therapies, which are marketed in countries around the world, represents groundbreaking and life-saving advances in medicine. As a Sanofi company, Genzyme benefits from the reach and resources of one of the world’s largest pharmaceutical companies, with a shared commitment to improving the lives of patients. Learn