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**Alethia Biotherapeutics exercises its option to license Clusterin-specific antibodies for cancer therapeutics and diagnostics with National Research Council Canada's Biotechnology Research Institute (NRC-BRI).**

**Montreal, May 6, 2009** – Alethia Biotherapeutics announced today that it has signed an agreement to license the exclusive worldwide therapeutic and diagnostic rights on Clusterin-specific antibodies from the NRC Biotechnology Research Institute (NRC-BRI). Under the terms of the agreement, Alethia obtains a family of high-affinity monoclonal antibodies that block the function of secreted Clusterin (sCLU).

“Alethia is proud to add a new product to its portfolio of therapeutic monoclonal antibodies,” said Yves Cornellier, president and CEO. “This important addition to our pipeline brings the Company closer to clinical development and consolidates our position as an emerging player in the field of therapeutic monoclonal antibodies.”

A frequent complication of recurrent cancer is the spread of the primary tumor to other secondary sites, a process called metastasis. Increasing evidence points to tumor cell epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition (EMT) as an important contributing process to metastatic evolution. In addition, epithelial cancer cells that undergo EMT adopt a behavior that is very similar to cancer stem cells including an inherent resistance to chemo- and radiotherapy. Thus, the identification of proteins that participate and promote EMT may represent new therapeutic targets to increase the sensitivity of tumors to chemotherapy and prevent metastasis.

“We now have very strong evidence that sCLU is a critical downstream effector of EMT. In addition, recent literature has shed light on new stimulators of EMT such as response to chemotherapy, hypoxia, immune cell infiltration in tumors, and various cytokines. Taken together, these observations support the development of monoclonal antibodies against cancer-associated sCLU as an innovative solution for the treatment of solid tumors,” commented Dr. Mario Fillion, executive vice-president and CSO.

The lead product, 16B5, is a humanized monoclonal antibody currently in pre-clinical development in animal models of metastatic cancer for which treatment options are limited, including hormone-resistant prostate cancer, invasive breast cancer, and pancreatic cancer. Alethia is primed to launch large-scale manufacturing of 16B5 to carry out toxicology studies in 2009 in preparation for the filing of an IND soon after.

**About Alethia Biotherapeutics Inc.**

Alethia is a Montreal-based biotechnology company that was created in 2002 aimed at discovering tissue-specific disease targets and developing monoclonal antibodies for use as focused therapeutic in areas of unmet medical needs. Through the signature of several research partnerships, Alethia has access to monoclonal antibody generation technologies and downstream process development that contribute to quickening the development of therapeutics against the Company's most promising targets.



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