



Asterand Compound Reaches Clinical Development and Receives Milestone Payment

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Asterand plc (LSE: ATD) announces that its compound, BGC20-1531, out-licensed to BTG plc has progressed, to clinical development. The compound in development for treatment of migraine headaches, has entered a placebo/controlled phase I study to assess its safety, tolerability and pharmacokinetic profile in healthy volunteers.

Asterand licensed BGC20-1531 to BTG plc in 2006 as part of the company's plan to maximize the value of its intellectual property portfolio, resulting from the 2006 merger between Pharmagene, plc and Asterand, Inc. Upon reaching this clinical milestone, BTG has paid Asterand £250,000 in accordance with the licensing agreement. Should the compound reach further stages of development, Asterand will realize further milestone payments, licensing fees and royalties.

Migraine headaches are estimated to affect 10-20% of the world population. Many migraine sufferers do not experience sufficient relief from current treatments or cannot tolerate the side effects that they produce. This new compound has a different mechanism of action than drugs currently on the market for migraine and, if successful in clinical development, could provide a much sought after alternative for migraine sufferers.

Martyn Coombs, Asterand's Chief Executive Officer, commented:

"We are happy to see this compound from our large intellectual property portfolio being developed into a viable drug candidate. Partnering with a strong Company like BTG gives me confidence that this compound will reach its full potential and hopefully enhance the quality of life for migraine sufferers. Many of our compounds were originally developed using human tissue. Licensing them out allows their continued development while we focus on further advancing drug discovery by being the pre-eminent supplier of human tissue and human tissue based services. We will continue to look for opportunities to maximize the value of our other compounds."

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About Asterand

Asterand is a leading supplier of high quality human tissue and tissue-based services. Our comprehensive approach to human tissue and research services offers pharmaceutical, biotech and diagnostic companies the unique opportunity to have one company meet all of their human biomaterial needs along the continuum of drug discovery and development. Our mission is to accelerate target discovery and compound validation and enable pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to take safer and more effective drugs into the clinic.