

December 22, 2016



Ligand Enters Commercial License and Supply Agreements for Captisol®-enabled trametinib

SAN DIEGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- **Ligand Pharmaceuticals Incorporated (NASDAQ: LGND)** announces it has entered into global license and supply agreements with Novartis for the development and commercialization of a Captisol-enabled oral liquid formulation of trametinib, a kinase inhibitor currently indicated as a single agent or in combination with dabrafenib, for the treatment of patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma with BRAF V600 mutation. Under the terms of the license, Ligand will be eligible to receive a license fee, royalties on future net sales, and revenue from Captisol material sales. Novartis will be responsible for all costs related to the program.

“This represents an expansion of our relationship with Novartis as they develop an oral liquid formulation potential treatment option,” commented John Higgins, Chief Executive Officer of Ligand. “This transaction continues to show the ability of Captisol to address unmet solubility and other formulation issues facing the industry.”

About Captisol®

Captisol is a patent-protected, chemically modified cyclodextrin with a structure designed to optimize the solubility and stability of drugs. Captisol was invented and initially developed by scientists in the laboratories of Dr. Valentino Stella at the University of Kansas’ Higuchi Biosciences Center for specific use in drug development and formulation. This unique technology has enabled several FDA-approved products, including Amgen’s Kyprolis®, Baxter International’s Nexterone® and Spectrum’s EVOMELA®. There are more than 40 Captisol-enabled products currently in various stages of development.

About Ligand Pharmaceuticals

Ligand is a biopharmaceutical company focused on developing or acquiring technologies that help pharmaceutical companies discover and develop medicines. Our business model creates value for stockholders by providing a diversified portfolio of biotech and pharmaceutical product revenue streams that are supported by an efficient and low corporate cost structure. Our goal is to offer investors an opportunity to participate in the promise of the biotech industry in a profitable, diversified and lower-risk business than a typical biotech company. Our business model is based on doing what we do best: drug discovery, early-stage drug development, product reformulation and partnering. We partner with other pharmaceutical companies to leverage what they do best (late-stage development, regulatory management and commercialization) to ultimately generate our revenue. Ligand’s Captisol® platform technology is a patent-protected, chemically modified cyclodextrin with a structure designed to optimize the solubility and stability of drugs.

OmniAb[®] is a patent-protected transgenic animal platform used in the discovery of fully human mono- and bispecific therapeutic antibodies. Ligand has established multiple alliances, licenses and other business relationships with the world's leading pharmaceutical companies including Novartis, Amgen, Merck, Pfizer, Celgene, Gilead, Janssen, Baxter International and Eli Lilly.

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Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains forward-looking statements by Ligand that involve risks and uncertainties and reflect Ligand's judgment as of the date of this release. These include statements regarding clinical development of Captisol-enabled trametinib, the possibility of regulatory approval for a pediatric indication, commercial success, efficacy, potency, competitiveness and the strength of Ligand's product portfolio. Actual events or results may differ from our expectations. For example, there can be no assurance that Captisol-enabled trametinib will progress through clinical development or receive required regulatory approvals within the expected timelines or at all, that further clinical trials will confirm any safety or other characteristics or profile, that there will be a market of any size for Captisol-enabled trametinib or that Captisol-enabled trametinib will be beneficial to patients or successfully marketed. The failure to meet expectations with respect to any of the foregoing matters may reduce Ligand's stock price. Additional information concerning these and other important risk factors affecting Ligand can be found in Ligand's prior press releases available at www.ligand.com as well as in Ligand's public periodic filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, available at www.sec.gov. Ligand disclaims any intent or obligation to update these forward-looking statements beyond the date of this press release, except as required by law. This caution is made under the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

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