

# PIERIS PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

## AUDIT COMMITTEE CHARTER

### I. General Statement of Purpose

The purposes of the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors (the “Audit Committee”) of Pieris Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (the “Company”) are to:

- oversee the accounting and financial reporting processes of the Company and the audits of the Company’s financial statements;
- take, or recommend that the Board of Directors of the Company (the “Board”) take, appropriate action to oversee the qualifications, independence and performance of the Company’s independent auditors;
- prepare the report required by the rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) to be included in the Company’s annual proxy statement;
- oversee the procedures for addressing complaints and concerns regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters; and
- review related person transactions.

### II. Composition

The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members of the Board, each of whom must (1) be “independent” as defined in Rule 5605(a)(2) under the Stock Market Rules of the Nasdaq Stock Market (“Nasdaq”), commencing upon the approval for listing of the Company’s equity securities on Nasdaq; (2) meet the criteria for independence set forth in Rule 10A-3(b)(1) promulgated under Section 10A(m)(3) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”), subject to the exemptions provided in Rule 10A-3(c) under the Exchange Act; and (3) not have participated in the preparation of the financial statements of the Company or a current subsidiary of the Company at any time during the past three years.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, one director who (1) is not “independent” as defined in Rule 5605(a)(2) under the Nasdaq Stock Market Rules; (2) satisfies the criteria for independence set forth in Section 10A(m)(3) of the Exchange Act and the rules thereunder; and (3) is not a current officer or employee or a Family Member of such officer or employee, may be appointed to the Audit Committee, if the Board, under exceptional and limited circumstances, determines that membership on the Audit Committee by the individual is required by the best interests of the Company and its stockholders, and the Board discloses, in the next annual proxy statement subsequent to such determination (or, if the Company does not file a proxy statement, in its Form 10-K), the nature of the relationship and the reasons for that determination. A member appointed under this exception may not serve on the Audit Committee for more than two years and may not chair the Audit Committee.

Each member of the Audit Committee must be able to read and understand fundamental financial statements, including a company's balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement. At least one member of the Audit Committee shall have past employment experience in finance or accounting, requisite professional certification in accounting, or any other comparable experience or background which results in the individual's financial sophistication, including being or having been a chief executive officer, chief financial officer or other senior officer with financial oversight responsibilities. One or more members of the Audit Committee may qualify as an "audit committee financial expert" under the rules promulgated by the SEC.

The members of the Audit Committee shall be appointed annually by the Board and may be replaced or removed by the Board with or without cause. Resignation or removal of a Director from the Board, for whatever reason, shall automatically and without any further action constitute resignation or removal, as applicable, from the Audit Committee. Any vacancy on the Audit Committee, occurring for whatever reason, may be filled only by the Board. The Board shall designate one member of the Audit Committee to be Chairperson of the Audit Committee. All indemnification, exculpation, expense reimbursement and advancement provisions and rights available to members of the Audit Committee in their capacities as directors of the Company shall be fully applicable with respect to their service on the Audit Committee or any subcommittee thereof.

### **III. Compensation**

A member of the Audit Committee may not, other than in his or her capacity as a member of the Audit Committee, the Board or any other committee established by the Board, receive directly or indirectly any consulting, advisory or other compensatory fee from the Company. A member of the Audit Committee may receive additional directors' fees to compensate such member for the significant time and effort expended by such member to fulfill his or her duties as an Audit Committee member.

### **IV. Meetings**

The Audit Committee shall meet as often as it determines is appropriate to carry out its responsibilities under this Charter, but not less frequently than quarterly. Meetings shall be in person or by conference telephone or other communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. In lieu of a meeting, the Audit Committee may act by unanimous written consent. The Chairperson of the Audit Committee, in consultation with the other committee members, may determine the frequency and length of the committee meetings and may set meeting agendas consistent with this Charter. The Chairperson shall establish such other rules as may from time to time be necessary and proper for the conduct of the business of the Audit Committee. The Chairperson shall have unlimited access to management and to information related to the Audit Committee's purposes. The Audit Committee shall from time to time meet with the Company's independent auditors without members of the Company's management present.

## V. Responsibilities and Authority

### A. Review of Charter

- The Audit Committee shall review and reassess the adequacy of this Charter annually and recommend to the Board any amendments or modifications to the Charter that the Audit Committee deems appropriate.

### B. Matters Relating to Selection, Performance and Independence of Independent Auditors

- The Audit Committee shall be directly responsible for the appointment, retention and termination, and for determining the compensation, of the Company's independent auditors engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Company. The Audit Committee may consult with management in fulfilling these duties, but may not delegate these responsibilities to management.
- The Audit Committee shall be directly responsible for oversight of the work of the independent auditors (including resolution of disagreements between management and the independent auditors regarding financial reporting) engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Company.
- The Audit Committee shall instruct the independent auditors that the independent auditors shall report directly to the Audit Committee.
- The Audit Committee shall pre-approve all auditing services and the terms thereof (which may include providing comfort letters in connection with securities underwritings) and non-audit services (other than non-audit services prohibited under Section 10A(g) of the Exchange Act or the applicable rules of the SEC or the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (the "PCAOB")) to be provided to the Company by the independent auditors; provided, however, the pre-approval requirement is waived with respect to the provision of non-audit services for the Company if the "de minimus" provisions of Section 10A(i)(1)(B) of the Exchange Act are satisfied. This authority to pre-approve non-audit services may be delegated to one or more members of the Audit Committee, who shall present all decisions to pre-approve an activity to the full Audit Committee at its first meeting following such decision.
- The Audit Committee shall review and approve the scope and staffing of the independent auditors' annual audit plan(s).
- The Audit Committee shall (1) request that the independent auditors provide the Audit Committee with the written disclosures and the letter required by PCAOB Rule 3526 ("Rule 3526"), (2) require that the independent auditors submit to the Audit Committee at least annually a formal written statement describing all relationships between the independent auditors or any of its affiliates and the

Company or persons in financial reporting oversight roles at the Company that might reasonably be thought to bear on the independence of the independent auditors, (3) discuss with the independent auditors the potential effects of any disclosed relationships or services on the objectivity and independence of the independent auditors, (4) require that the independent auditors provide to the Audit Committee written affirmation that the independent auditor is, as of the date of the affirmation, independent in compliance with PCAOB Rule 3520 and (5) based on such disclosures, statement, discussion and affirmation, take or recommend that the Board take appropriate action in response to the independent auditor's report to satisfy itself of the independent auditor's independence. In addition, before approving the initial engagement of any independent auditor, the Audit Committee shall receive, review and discuss with the audit firm all information required by, and otherwise take all actions necessary for compliance with the requirements of, Rule 3526. References to rules of the PCAOB shall be deemed to refer to such rules and to any substantially equivalent rules adopted to replace such rules, in each case as subsequently amended, modified or supplemented.

- The Audit Committee may consider whether the provision of the services covered in Items 9(e)(2) and 9(e)(3) of Regulation 14A of the Exchange Act (or any successor provision) is compatible with maintaining the independent auditor's independence.
- The Audit Committee shall evaluate the independent auditor's qualifications, performance and independence, and shall present its conclusions with respect to the independent auditors to the full Board. As part of such evaluation, at least annually, the Audit Committee shall:
  - obtain and review a report or reports from the independent auditors describing (1) the auditor's internal quality-control procedures, (2) any material issues raised by the most recent internal quality-control review or peer review of the auditors or by any inquiry or investigation by government or professional authorities, within the preceding five years, regarding one or more independent audits carried out by the auditors, and any steps taken to address any such issues, and (3) in order to assess the auditor's independence, all relationships between the independent auditors and the Company;
  - review and evaluate the performance of the independent auditors and the lead partner (and the Audit Committee may review and evaluate the performance of other members of the independent auditor's audit staff); and
  - assure the regular rotation of the audit partners (including, without limitation, the lead and concurring partners) as required under the Exchange Act and Regulation S-X.

In this regard, the Audit Committee shall also (1) seek the opinion of management and the internal auditors of the independent auditor's performance and (2) consider whether, in

order to assure continuing auditor independence, there should be regular rotation of the audit firm.

- The Audit Committee may establish, or recommend to the Board, policies with respect to the potential hiring of current or former employees of the independent auditors.

### **C. Audited Financial Statements and Annual Audit**

- The Audit Committee shall review the overall audit plan (both internal and external) with the independent auditors and the members of management who are responsible for preparing the Company's financial statements, including the Company's Chief Financial Officer and/or principal accounting officer or principal financial officer (the Chief Financial Officer and such other officer or officers are referred to herein collectively as the "Senior Accounting Executive").
- The Audit Committee shall review and discuss with management (including the Company's Senior Accounting Executive) and with the independent auditors the Company's annual audited financial statements, including (a) all critical accounting policies and practices used or to be used by the Company, (b) the Company's disclosures under "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" (the "MD&A") prior to the filing of the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K, and (c) any significant financial reporting issues that have arisen in connection with the preparation of such audited financial statements, and make a recommendation to the Board as to whether the Company's MD&A should be included in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the last fiscal year.
- The Audit Committee must review:
  - (i) any analyses prepared by management, any internal auditors and/or the independent auditors setting forth significant financial accounting and reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the financial statements, including analyses of the effects of alternative GAAP methods on the financial statements. The Audit Committee may consider the ramifications of the use of such alternative disclosures and treatments on the financial statements, and the treatment preferred by the independent auditors. The Audit Committee may also consider other material written communications between the registered public accounting firm and management, such as any management letter or schedule of unadjusted differences;
  - (ii) major issues as to the adequacy of the Company's internal controls and any special audit steps adopted in light of material control deficiencies;
  - (iii) major issues regarding accounting principles and procedures and financial statement presentations, including any significant changes in the Company's selection or application of accounting principles;

- (iv) the effects of regulatory and accounting initiatives, as well as off-balance sheet transactions and structures, on the financial statements of the Company;
  - (v) other sections of the annual report and related regulatory filings before release and consider the accuracy and completeness of the information; and
  - (vi) the certifications made by the Company's principal executive officer ("PEO") and the Senior Accounting Executive.
- The Audit Committee shall review and discuss with the independent auditors (outside of the presence of management) how the independent auditors plan to handle their responsibilities under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, and request assurance from the independent auditors that Section 10A(b) of the Exchange Act has not been implicated.
  - The Audit Committee shall review and discuss with the independent auditors any audit problems or difficulties and management's response thereto. This review shall include (1) any difficulties encountered by the independent auditors in the course of performing their audit work, including any restrictions on the scope of their activities or their access to information, (2) any significant disagreements with management and (3) a discussion of the responsibilities, budget and staffing of the Company's internal audit function.
  - This review may also include:
    - (i) any accounting adjustments that were noted or proposed by the independent auditors but were "passed" (as immaterial or otherwise);
    - (ii) any communications between the audit team and the audit firm's national office regarding auditing or accounting issues presented by the engagement; and
    - (iii) any management or internal control letter issued, or proposed to be issued, by the independent auditors.
  - The Audit Committee shall discuss with the independent auditors those matters brought to the attention of the Audit Committee by the independent auditors pursuant to applicable Statements on Auditing Standards and PCAOB Rules.
  - The Audit Committee shall also review and discuss with the independent auditors the report required to be delivered by such auditors pursuant to Section 10A(k) of the Exchange Act.
  - If brought to the attention of the Audit Committee, the Audit Committee shall discuss with the PEO and Senior Accounting Executive of the Company (1) all significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in the design or operation of internal control over financial reporting which are reasonably likely to adversely

affect the Company's ability to record, process, summarize and report financial information required to be disclosed by the Company in the reports that it files or submits under the Exchange Act, within the time periods specified in the SEC's rules and forms, and (2) any fraud involving management or other employees who have a significant role in the Company's internal control over financial reporting.

- Based on the Audit Committee's review and discussions (1) with management of the audited financial statements, (2) with the independent auditors of the matters required to be discussed by applicable Statements on Auditing Standards and PCAOB Rules, and (3) with the independent auditors concerning the independent auditor's independence, the Audit Committee shall make a recommendation to the Board as to whether the Company's audited financial statements should be included in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the last fiscal year.
- The Audit Committee shall prepare the Audit Committee report required by Item 407(d) of Regulation S-K of the Exchange Act (or any successor provision) to be included in the Company's annual proxy statement.

#### **D. Internal Auditors**

- The Audit Committee shall evaluate the performance, responsibilities, budget and staffing of the Company's internal audit function and review the internal audit plan. Such evaluation may include a review of the responsibilities, budget and staffing of the Company's internal audit function with the independent auditors.
- In connection with the Audit Committee's evaluation of the Company's internal audit function, including compliance with The Institute of Internal Auditors' *Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*, the Audit Committee may evaluate the performance of the senior officer or officers responsible for the internal audit function.

#### **E. Unaudited Quarterly Financial Statements**

- The Audit Committee shall discuss with management and the independent auditors, prior to the filing of the Company's Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, (1) the Company's quarterly financial statements and the Company's related disclosures under "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations," (2) such issues as may be brought to the Audit Committee's attention by the independent auditors pursuant to Statement on Auditing Standards No. 100, and (3) any significant financial reporting issues that have arisen in connection with the preparation of such financial statements.

#### **F. Earnings Press Releases**

- The Audit Committee may discuss the Company's earnings press releases, as well as financial information and earnings guidance provided to analysts and rating agencies, including, in general, the types of information to be disclosed and the

types of presentations to be made (paying particular attention to the use of “pro forma” or “adjusted” non-GAAP information).

#### **G. Risk Assessment and Management**

- The Audit Committee shall discuss the guidelines and policies that govern the process by which the Company’s exposure to risk is assessed and managed by management.
- In connection with the Audit Committee’s discussion of the Company’s risk assessment and management guidelines, the Audit Committee shall discuss or consider the Company’s major financial risk exposures and the steps that the Company’s management has taken to monitor and control such exposures.

The Audit Committee shall review, with the Company’s counsel, any legal or regulatory matter that could have a significant impact on the Company’s financial statements.

- The Audit Committee shall consider and review with the independent auditors the effectiveness of the Company’s internal control system, including information technology security and control.
- The Audit Committee shall review management’s annual internal control report which acknowledges management’s responsibility for establishing and maintaining an adequate internal control structure and procedures for financial reporting; and contains an assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control structure.

#### **H. Procedures for Addressing Complaints and Concerns**

- The Audit Committee shall establish procedures for (1) the receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Company regarding accounting, internal accounting controls, or auditing matters and (2) the confidential, anonymous submission by employees of the Company of concerns regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters.
- The Audit Committee may review and reassess the adequacy of these procedures periodically and adopt any changes to such procedures that the Audit Committee deems necessary or appropriate.

#### **I. Regular Reports to the Board**

- The Audit Committee shall regularly report to and review with the Board any issues that arise with respect to the quality or integrity of the Company’s financial statements, the Company’s compliance with legal or regulatory requirements, the performance and independence of the independent auditors, the performance of the internal audit function and any other matters that the Audit Committee deems appropriate or is requested to review for the benefit of the Board.

## **VI. Additional Authority**

The Audit Committee is authorized, on behalf of the Board, to do any of the following as it deems necessary or appropriate:

### **A. Engagement of Advisors**

- The Audit Committee may engage independent counsel and such other advisors it deems necessary or advisable to carry out its responsibilities and powers, and, if such counsel or other advisors are engaged, shall determine the compensation or fees payable to such counsel or other advisors.

### **B. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

- The Audit Committee may discuss with management and the independent auditors, and review with the Board, the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the Company and its subsidiaries and the Company's compliance with such requirements. After these discussions, the Audit Committee may, if it determines it to be appropriate, make recommendations to the Board with respect to the Company's policies and procedures regarding compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- The Audit Committee may discuss with management legal matters (including pending or threatened litigation) that may have a material effect on the Company's financial statements or its compliance policies and procedures.
- The Audit Committee may also undertake other appropriate activities, including but not limited to:
  - (i) Review, with the Company's counsel, any legal or regulatory matter that could have a significant impact on the Company's financial statements.
  - (ii) Review and approve the Company's investment policies.
  - (iii) Review the adequacy of the Company's insurance coverage.
  - (iv) Review the status of any material tax audits and proceedings, the Company's tax strategy and other material tax matters.
  - (v) Maintain minutes or other records of meetings and activities of the Audit Committee.
  - (vi) Review the effectiveness of the system for monitoring compliance with laws and regulations and the results of management's investigation and follow-up (including disciplinary action) of any instances of noncompliance.

- (vii) Review the findings of any examinations by regulatory agencies, and any auditor observations.
- (viii) Review the process for communicating the code of conduct to the Company's personnel, and for monitoring compliance therewith, including the establishment of procedures to ensure open and regular communications with the Company's Compliance Committee.
- (ix) Review with management the policies and procedures with respect to officers' expense accounts and perquisites.
- (x) Perform any other activities consistent with this Charter, the Company's by-laws, and governing law, as the Audit Committee or the Board deems necessary or appropriate.

### **C. Conflicts of Interest**

The Audit Committee shall conduct an appropriate review of all related party transactions for potential conflict of interest situations on an ongoing basis, and the approval of the Audit Committee shall be required for all such transactions.

### **D. General**

- The Audit Committee may form and delegate authority to subcommittees consisting of one or more of its members as the Audit Committee deems appropriate to carry out its responsibilities and exercise its powers.
- The Audit Committee may perform such other oversight functions outside of its stated purpose as may be requested by the Board from time to time.
- In performing its oversight function, the Audit Committee shall be entitled to rely upon advice and information that it receives in its discussions and communications with management, the independent auditors and such experts, advisors and professionals as may be consulted with by the Audit Committee.
- The Audit Committee is authorized to request that any officer or employee of the Company, the Company's outside legal counsel, the Company's independent auditors or any other professional retained by the Company to render advice to the Company attend a meeting of the Audit Committee or meet with any members of or advisors to the Audit Committee.
- The Audit Committee is authorized to incur such ordinary administrative expenses as are necessary or appropriate in carrying out its duties.

Notwithstanding the responsibilities and powers of the Audit Committee set forth in this Charter, the Audit Committee does not have the responsibility of planning or conducting audits of the Company's financial statements or determining whether the Company's financial statements are complete, accurate and in accordance with GAAP. Such responsibilities are the duty of

management and, to the extent of the independent auditor's audit responsibilities, the independent auditors. In addition, it is not the duty of the Audit Committee to conduct investigations or to ensure compliance with laws and regulations.