



Provepharm signs license agreement with Daiichi Sankyo to provide “Methylthioninium chloride Proveblue, Solution for injection” to Japan

Daiichi Sankyo will resolve the unmet need for an approved methylthioninium chloride injectable drug in Japan

Methylthioninium chloride is more commonly known as methylene blue

Marseille, France, 29 November 2011 - Provepharm, a French start-up specialized in the development of pharmaceutical applications, today announces that it has entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Daiichi Sankyo, a global pharmaceuticals firm, to make Provepharm’s injectable medicinal product, Methylthioninium chloride Proveblue, Solution for injection, available in Japan. The Proveblue medicinal product is used for the treatment of methaemoglobinaemia induced by life-threatening medicinal and chemical products.

Under this agreement, Provepharm grants Daiichi Sankyo exclusive rights to methylthioninium chloride Proveblue, solution for injection in Japan. Daiichi Sankyo will be responsible for the submission of a marketing authorization application and for all commercial activities relating to the product in this country. Commercial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Provepharm developed the Proveblue medicinal product from its patented methylthioninium chloride Proveblue active substance produced under cGMP conditions. This was the first methylene blue to meet the European Pharmacopeia standards and ICH requirements.

The Proveblue medicinal product gained approval by the European Medicines Agency in May 2011 and represents a significant improvement in quality from previous methylthioninium chloride products. In particular it has enhanced purity in comparison with methylthioninium chloride products that only reached United States Pharmacopeia (USP) standard.

Daiichi Sankyo is committed to the development in Japan of methylthioninium chloride antidote for the treatment of life-threatening methaemoglobinaemia. This is in response to the request from the Japanese Ministry of Healthcare, Labor and Welfare, to the industry to resolve the unmet need for approved medicinal products in certain indications.

Daiichi Sankyo has selected the Proveblue medicinal product in view of the demonstrated achievements of Provepharm on methylthioninium chloride and expects to leverage Provepharm’s work and European registration to accelerate the time-to-market of the product in Japan.

“We are honoured to be collaborating with Daiichi Sankyo,” said Michel Féraud, CEO and founder of Provepharm. “We are proud to contribute to bringing an enhanced quality medicinal product to Japanese patients by improving the treatment of methaemoglobinemia.”

About methaemoglobineamia

Methaemoglobinaemia is a disorder characterized by an abnormal amount of methaemoglobin in the blood, leading to an inability to release oxygen to body tissue effectively. The disorder can be inherited or acquired after exposure to certain chemicals or drugs for example anaesthetics, certain antibiotics and nitrites which are used in the preservation of food.

About Provepharm

Provepharm is a subsidiary of the Provence Technologies Group that is specialized in the development and commercialization of pharmaceutical drug products derived from active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) synthesized and patented by its parent company. Anticipating the pharmaceutical industry's needs, Provepharm started by adopting a strategy of repositioning and rehabilitating known compounds in new indications. This development strategy was designed to cater for the growing demand for APIs that comply with current quality demands.

Provepharm supplies the pharmaceutical industry with pharmaceutical-grade methylene blue and has embarked on studies of its efficacy in indications under development, such as malaria, as well as offering the compound for research into neurodegenerative diseases.

The company is based in Marseille, France and employs 10 people. It has raised funding of around EUR 8 million to date from its founders, business angels and venture capital companies. Provepharm is one of 2,000 firms that have received the OSEO Excellence designation of the French Innovation Promotion Agency OSEO.

For more information, please visit www.provepharm.com

About Daiichi Sankyo

The Daiichi Sankyo Group is dedicated to the creation and supply of innovative pharmaceutical products to address the diversified, unmet medical needs of patients in both mature and emerging markets. While maintaining its portfolio of marketed pharmaceuticals for hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and bacterial infections, the Group is engaged in the development of treatments for thrombotic disorders and focused on the discovery of novel oncology and cardiovascular-metabolic therapies. Furthermore, the Daiichi Sankyo Group has created a "Hybrid Business Model," which will respond to market and customer diversity and optimize growth opportunities across the value chain.

For more information, please visit www.daiichisankyo.com

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