Isis Pharmaceuticals Appoints Paula Soteropoulos As President And Chief Executive Officer Of Akcea Therapeutics

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Isis-owned Subsidiary Launched to Conduct Development and Commercialization of Isis' Lipid Franchise Drugs

CARLSBAD, Calif. and CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Jan. 6, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Isis Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ: ISIS) announced today the appointment of Paula Soteropoulos as president and chief executive officer (CEO) of Akcea Therapeutics, the Isis-owned, lipid franchise subsidiary responsible for the development and commercialization of Isis' lipid drugs, ISIS-APOCIII$_{Rx}$, ISIS-APO(a)$_{Rx}$, ISIS-ANGPTL3$_{Rx}$,and their more potent LICA follow-ons.

In this position, Ms. Soteropoulos will utilize her expertise in commercializing drugs for severe, rare and cardiovascular diseases in global markets to advance Isis' novel lipid franchise through development and commercialization. Ms. Soteropoulos will also serve as a member of Isis' leadership team, in which she will provide valuable commercial expertise to Isis' research and development activities.

"I have previously worked with and have respected Paula for many years and look forward to her contributions to our team, especially as we take this next step in the evolution of our business strategy. Her expertise and knowledge of the severe and rare/cardiovascular space coupled with her business development and global marketing background is ideally suited for leading Akcea," said B. Lynne Parshall, chief operating officer at Isis Pharmaceuticals. "The formation of Akcea Therapeutics comes at a strategically important point in time for Isis. This new subsidiary will support greater control of our drug programs and provide for the retention of more revenues from these programs. It also ensures that Isis' core focus remains on innovation as we continue to advance our technology and our pipeline."

"Leading Akcea Therapeutics will allow me to bring together many of my passions, developing and marketing important new medicines that could change the lives of patients worldwide, working within the severe, rare and cardiovascular space, an area that I know very well, and leading a new, ready-for-success company that has a pipeline rich in new products. I also get to work with the high-caliber development teams at Isis that I worked with during my tenure at Genzyme," said Paula Soteropoulos, president and chief executive officer at Akcea Therapeutics.

Prior to joining Akcea Therapeutics, Ms. Soteropoulos held a number of leadership positions in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical arena. Most recently Ms. Soteropoulos was senior vice president and general manager cardiometabolic, rare diseases and strategic alliances at Moderna Therapeutics, Inc. Prior to Moderna, Ms. Soteropoulos spent 21 years at Genzyme Corporation where she was instrumental in advancing new products from discovery through clinical development and commercialization with significant roles driving strategy, sales and marketing and business development. Additionally, Paula led manufacturing process development, strategic capacity planning and supply chain development. In her most recent role at Genzyme as vice president and general manager of Genzyme Cardiovascular division, Ms. Soteropoulos was responsible for moving Genzyme's oral cholesterol drug to profitability and spearheading the global launch of KYNAMRO®. Ms. Soteropoulos has a master of science degree in chemical and biochemical engineering and a bachelors in science degree in chemical engineering from Tufts University.

ABOUT AKCEA THERAPEUTICS

Akcea Therapeutics is a newly formed, wholly owned subsidiary of Isis Pharmaceuticals located in Cambridge, Mass. Isis established Akcea to develop and commercialize the drugs in Isis' lipid franchise, including ISIS-APOCIII$_{Rx}$, the most advanced drug currently in a Phase 3 study in patients with familial chylomicronemia, a severe and rare disease that is responsible for extremely elevated levels of triglycerides; ISIS-APO(a)$_{Rx}$ for patients with high levels of Lp(a), an independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease, currently in a Phase 2 study in patients with high Lp(a) levels; and ISIS-ANGPTL3$_{Rx}$ currently in early clinical development as a broad dyslipidemia agent. In total, Akcea will be responsible for the development and commercialization of these three antisense drugs and their more potent LICA follow-on drugs. LICA is Isis' new conjugation technology designed to enhance the potency of antisense drugs to particular targets, including the liver. In preclinical studies, LICA technology directed toward liver targets produced a ten-fold increase in potency in both Isis' second-generation and generation 2.5 drugs.

ABOUT ISIS PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

Isis is exploiting its leadership position in RNA-targeted technology to discover and develop novel drugs for its product pipeline and for its partners. Isis' broad pipeline consists of 33 drugs to treat a wide variety of diseases with an emphasis on cardiovascular, metabolic, severe and rare diseases, including neurological disorders, and cancer. Isis' partner, Genzyme, is commercializing Isis' lead product, KYNAMRO®, in the United States and other countries for the treatment of patients with homozygous FH. Isis has numerous drugs in Phase 3 development in severe and rare and cardiovascular diseases. These include ISIS-APOCIII$_{Rx}$, a drug Isis is developing through its wholly owned subsidiary, Akcea Therapeutics, to treat patients with severely high triglycerides, such as patients with familial chylomicronemia syndrome; ISIS-TTR$_{Rx}$, a drug Isis is developing with GSK to treat patients with the polyneuropathy form of TTR amyloidosis; and, ISIS-SMN$_{Rx}$, a drug Isis is developing with Biogen Idec to treat infants and children with spinal muscular atrophy, a severe and rare neuromuscular disease. Isis' patents provide strong and extensive protection for its drugs and technology. Additional information about Isis is available at www.isispharm.com.

ISIS PHARMACEUTICALS' FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENT

This press release includes forward-looking statements regarding Isis Pharmaceuticals and Isis' business and the commercial potential of Isis'

technology and lipid franchise drugs and the business of Akcea Therapeutics and the commercial potential of drugs and technologies Akcea develops. Any statement describing Isis' goals, expectations, financial or other projections, intentions or beliefs is a forward-looking statement and should be considered an at-risk statement. Such statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties, particularly those inherent in the process of discovering, developing and commercializing drugs that are safe and effective for use as human therapeutics, and in the endeavor of building a business around such drugs. Isis' forward-looking statements also involve assumptions that, if they never materialize or prove correct, could cause its results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Although Isis' forward-looking statements reflect the good faith judgment of its management, these statements are based only on facts and factors currently known by Isis. As a result, you are cautioned not to rely on these forward-looking statements. These and other risks concerning Isis' programs are described in additional detail in Isis' annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2013, and its most recent quarterly report on Form 10-Q, which are on file with the SEC. Copies of these and other documents are available from the Company.

In this press release, unless the context requires otherwise, "Isis," "Company," "we," "our," and "us" refers to Isis Pharmaceuticals and its subsidiaries.

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