FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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EicOsis receives $15MM grant from the National Institute of Drug Abuse to help fund trials of non-opioid pain therapy

Innovative, non-addictive therapy for neuropathic pain is sought to replace harmful reliance on opiates

Davis, CA—(10/15/2019)—The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has awarded a grant to EicOsis LLC as part of the NIH Initiative Helping to End Addiction Long-Term (HEAL Initiative) to support human clinical trials of a novel compound that has been found effective for the treatment of pain in preclinical animal studies. Dr. Bruce Hammock, EicOsis CEO and founder, and his team aim to provide a new analgesic solution for neuropathic pain management without the side effects of opioids and other standard pain therapies.

Abuse of prescription opioids has contributed in the deaths of over 400,000 Americans in the last decade. This federal grant will help support Phase I and II clinical trials over the next 5 years with a goal of providing a new effective once-daily, oral, and non-addictive pain medication.

“For many neuropathy patients, opioids are the only pharmaceutical that can dull the neurological pain. The denial of the opioid help by many medical practitioners due to the crisis has resulted in suicides and resorting to street drugs that cause death. To have a safe, efficient, medically approved, effective medication for pain that is affordable and non-addictive would be a dream come true. We remain hopeful this will happen with EC5026,” Bev Anderson, President, Western Neuropathy Association.

The innovative method used to target pain originated in the entomology lab of Dr. Hammock at the University of California, Davis. His research discovered an enzymatic target involved in pain and inflammation in mammals. The drug candidate, known as EC5026, works to inhibit soluble epoxide hydrolase (sEH), a key enzyme in the metabolism of fatty acids. Inhibition of sEH treats pain by stabilizing natural analgesic and anti-inflammatory mediators.
Dr. Alan Buckpitt, PI of the grant and EicOsis Vice President of Pharmacology explains, “The pathway we are targeting acts in balance to the other inflammatory pathways that are already a target of the pharmaceutical industry, such as NSAIDs and Aspirin. In fact, sEH inhibitors developed by EicOsis have already shown efficacy against moderate-to-severe pain in horses and dogs, and acts to increase the activity of NSAIDs while reducing their side effects. This grant will help us establish effects on reducing opioid use and addiction liabilities.”

About EicOsis:
EicOsis (pronounced eye-co-sis) is a privately held company developing a first-in-class therapy of a once-daily, oral treatment for neuropathic and inflammatory pain in humans and companion animals. The technology of the lead compounds was developed at the University of California, Davis by EicOsis CEO/Founder and UCD Professor Dr. Bruce Hammock and licensed exclusively to EicOsis from the University of California, Davis. EicOsis expects to begin clinical testing of their lead drug candidate, EC5026, by the end of 2019.

About the HEAL program
The National Institutes of Health launched the HEAL Initiative in April 2018 to improve prevention and treatment strategies for opioid misuse and addiction and enhance pain management. The NIH HEAL Initiative aims to improve treatments for chronic pain, curb the rates of opioid use disorder and overdose and achieve long-term recovery from opioid addiction. EicOsis's award is one of 375 grant awards across 41 states made by the National Institutes of Health in fiscal year 2019 to apply scientific solutions to reverse the national opioid crisis.

The grant awarded to EicOsis is part the call for “Development of Medications to Prevent and Treat Opioid Use Disorders and Overdose”, and is a cooperative agreement between EicOsis and NIDA that is awarded in two parts: the first two years ($6MM) establish specific milestones, and the remaining three years ($9MM) are awarded based on the successful completion of these milestones.

“It’s clear that a multi-pronged scientific approach is needed to reduce the risks of opioids, accelerate development of effective non-opioid therapies for pain and provide more flexible and effective options for treating addiction to opioids,” said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., who launched the initiative in early 2018. “This unprecedented investment in the NIH HEAL Initiative demonstrates the commitment to reversing this devastating crisis.”

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For media and investment inquiries:
Cindy McReynolds
cbmcreynolds@eicosis.com
For more information on EicOsis:
Eicosis.com