

Biocept

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Biocept Announces Agreement with Aegea Biotechnologies to Develop New, Highly Sensitive PCR-based COVID-19 Assay Utilizing Patented Switch-Blocker PCR Technology

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Collaboration highlights the power and versatility of the proprietary Switch-Blocker technology, which may be applied to molecular diagnostics in COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, in addition to oncology applications currently commercialized and in development

SAN DIEGO, Aug. 6, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- [Biocept, Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: BIOC), a leading commercial provider of molecular technologies designed to provide physicians with clinically actionable information to improve the outcomes of patients with cancer, and Aegea Biotechnologies, Inc., an innovative private life science company with an extensive portfolio of issued patents in next-generation nucleic acid technologies, announce a development agreement focused on the co-development by Biocept and Aegea of a highly sensitive PCR-based assay designed by Aegea for detecting the COVID-19 virus. The COVID-19 PCR assay is based on the core Switch-Blocker technology used in Biocept's suite of ultra-sensitive oncology-focused assays. The collaboration will leverage Biocept's experience in developing high-performance assays based on the Switch-Blocker technology.



The COVID-19 PCR assay is being developed as a next-generation test designed for improved analytical performance in order to better assist healthcare providers in screening and managing patients. The test is designed to incorporate unique capabilities to increase the sensitivity in detecting SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19 virus) and to provide additional information on specific strain types. As part of the development agreement, Biocept has first option to negotiate a license agreement to any resulting new COVID-19 PCR assay for commercialization in its CLIA-certified, CAP-accredited high-complexity molecular lab.

The Switch-Blocker technology is patent protected in the United States and in 10 major international territories. The intellectual property underlying the Switch-Blocker technology is jointly owned by Biocept and Aegea. Under Biocept and Aegea's cross licensing agreement relating to the Switch-Blocker intellectual property, Aegea has exclusive rights in the field of infectious disease, and Biocept has certain rights within the field of clinical oncology.

"This project further expands on Biocept's initiatives in the COVID-19 PCR testing market and highlights our capabilities to develop high-complexity molecular-based assays based on our core Switch-Blocker technology for multiple applications, including potentially COVID-19," said Michael Nall, President and CEO of Biocept. "This agreement provides Biocept with new incremental revenue for R&D development services and, if successfully developed, an option to expand our COVID-19 testing capabilities with a next-generation COVID-19 PCR assay that we believe will have competitive advantages."

"Working with Biocept better enables the potential rapid development of this new PCR-based COVID-19 assay," said Stella M. Sung, Ph.D., Chief Business Officer of Aegea. "Biocept has successfully utilized Switch-Blocker technology to test for rare oncology-related genetic mutations in tens of thousands of clinical samples. Moreover, Biocept's CLIA laboratory is actively involved in COVID-19 PCR testing, which makes them the ideal partner for Aegea."

About COVID-19 PCR Assay Development

The new test under development is designed to have several advantages compared with other COVID-19 PCR assays as a result of the single nucleotide discrimination capacities of the Switch-Blocker technology. The assay is designed to detect low copy numbers of viral RNA, therefore potentially detecting the viral load at much lower levels than conventional PCR-based assays. If successful, this would be an important differentiating feature as it has been reported that asymptomatic patients are able to infect others. As designed, the COVID-19 PCR assay would also allow for superior specificity in its ability to identify the different strains of SARS-CoV-2, as well as distinguish SARS-CoV-2, which is associated with COVID-19, from other common forms of the SARS virus.

About Aegea Biotechnologies

Aegea Biotechnologies, Inc., located in San Diego, California, is a biotechnology company focusing on the development and commercialization of next-generation nucleic acid technologies. A primary focus for the company is nucleic acid technology innovations that embrace molecular diagnostic assays, qPCR technologies, sequencing methods including both Sanger and NGS, and rapid point-of-care COVID-19 testing. Aegea has complementary collaborations with Biocept (Nasdaq: BIOC) and Tauriga Sciences (OTCQB: TAUG) for developing its COVID-19 tests.

About Biocept

Biocept, Inc. is a molecular diagnostics company with commercialized assays for lung, breast, gastric, colorectal and prostate cancers, and melanoma. The Company uses its proprietary liquid biopsy technology to provide physicians with clinically actionable information for treating and monitoring patients diagnosed with cancer. The Company's patented Target Selector™ liquid biopsy technology platform captures and analyzes tumor-associated molecular markers in both circulating tumor cells (CTCs) and in circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA). With thousands of tests performed, the platform has demonstrated the ability to identify cancer mutations and alterations to inform physicians about a patient's disease and therapeutic options. For additional information, please visit www.biocept.com.

Forward-Looking Statements Disclaimer Statement

This release contains forward-looking statements that are based upon current expectations or beliefs, as well as a number of assumptions about future events. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements and the assumptions upon which they are based are reasonable, we can give no assurance that such expectations and assumptions will prove to have been correct. Forward-looking statements are generally identifiable by the use of words like "may," "will," "should," "could," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "intend," or "project" or the negative of these words or other variations on these words or comparable terminology. To the extent that statements in this release are not strictly historical, including without limitation statements regarding the ability of Biocept's tests to provide clinically actionable information to oncologist and their patients, the ability of Biocept and Aegea to successfully co-develop any COVID-19 PCR assay, the anticipated improved analytical performance of any COVID-19 PCR assay developed by Biocept and Aegea, the ability of any COVID-19 PCR assay developed by Biocept and Aegea to increase the sensitivity in detecting SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19 virus) and to provide additional information on specific strain types, advantages of any COVID-19 PCR assay developed by Biocept and Aegea as compared to other COVID-19 PCR assays, and the ability of Biocept's platform to identify cancer mutations and alterations to inform physicians about a patient's disease and therapeutic options, such statements are forward-looking, and are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The reader is cautioned not to put undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, as these statements are subject to numerous risk factors as set forth in Biocept's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings. The effects of such risks and uncertainties could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements contained in this release. We do not plan to update any such forward-looking statements and expressly disclaim any duty to update the information contained in this press release except as required by law. Readers are advised to review our filings with the SEC, which can be accessed over the Internet at the SEC's website located at www.sec.gov.

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