



Rare Partners announces a three parties alliance for thalassemia

RP announcement

Rare Partners, the Italian non profit company dedicated to rare diseases, today announced its first product development project, related to the use of sirolimus (also known as rapamycin) in thalassemic patients and based on the research results obtained and patented by Professor Roberto Gambari and coworkers at the University of Ferrara (Italy).

Rare Partners finalized an agreement with the patent's inventors and assignees (University of Ferrara and Associazione Veneta per la Lotta alla Talassemia), aimed at completing the preclinical studies and proceeding with Orphan Drug Designation and clinical development in thalassemic patients. Rapamycin, already used as an immunosuppressant in transplanted patients, should act by inducing erythroid differentiation and expression of embryo-fetal hemoglobin (HbF). It is known that an increase of HbF in thalassemic patients may result in a relevant clinical improvement, such as reduced transfusion frequency.

"The acquisition of this intellectual property represents a major milestone in our development. We are particularly pleased to have reached this agreement and to have the possibility to manage the development of a compound which such a great potential of clinical benefit. The pre-clinical development for the new therapeutic indication has already started, with beginning of clinical trials planned for second half of 2012" said Marco Prosdocimi, Managing Director at **Rare Partners**.

About Rare Partners

Rare Partners Srl is a non profit company devoted to the development of new therapies and diagnostics in the field of rare diseases. The company was founded in Milan on March 2010 and registered in Italy as "Impresa Sociale". The basic idea of **Rare Partners** is to match non profit financial resources (public and private) with industrial drug development expertise, provided by the company's organization together with a strong network of consultants.

About Associazione Veneta per la Lotta alla Talassemia

Associazione Veneta per la Lotta alla Talassemia (A.V.L.T.) is a non profit organization established since 1976 in Rovigo, Italy. Its mission is to promote different initiatives aimed at preventing thalassemia and providing the best social and healthcare treatment for thalassemia sufferers.

About University of Ferrara

The University of Ferrara, established in 1391 is one of the oldest universities in Italy, counting with more than 18,000 students and with an outstanding track-record of excellence in scientific research, including life sciences. Professor Roberto Gambari is the founder and Director of the Laboratory for the development of genetic and pharmacogenomic therapy of thalassemia, Thal-Lab at the University of Ferrara.