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Cara Therapeutics Announces Results of Phase 1 Clinical Trial of Novel Analgesic

Cara Therapeutics, Inc. today announced results of a Phase 1 clinical trial for its peripherally acting kappa opioid agonist, CR665, under development for the treatment of postoperative pain. The drug candidate was safe and well-tolerated after intravenous infusion, and resulted in plasma levels of CR665 expected to be associated with clinical analgesic activity. In addition, CR665 infusion triggered a quantitative endocrine biomarker of peripheral kappa opioid receptor activation in both men and women.

The Phase 1a single-center clinical trial evaluated the safety, tolerability, pharmacokinetic profile, and pharmacological activity of CR665 in a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled, single escalating intravenous dose study in 60 healthy male and female volunteers. CR665 was shown to be safe at all doses investigated, with no apparent gender differences, and no reports of serious side effects or adverse central nervous system activity. Linear, dose-proportional increases in systemic exposure to CR665 were observed. Relatively low doses of CR665 resulted in plasma levels at or above the plasma levels of a drug expected to be associated with clinical analgesic efficacy. In addition, the pharmacological activity of CR665 at peripheral kappa receptors was confirmed utilizing a quantitative endocrine biomarker, which demonstrated receptor activation at relatively low doses of the drug candidate.

"We are extremely pleased with the outcome of our trial. These preliminary results are consistent with CR665's peripheral mechanism of action," stated Dr. Frédérique Menzaghi, Cara's Vice President of Research and Development. “The results have not only confirmed our expectations in relation to the safety of CR665 but have also provided evidence of kappa receptor activation at much lower drug doses than predicted from preclinical animal studies.”

The Company aims to move CR665 forward into Phase 1b and Phase 2 trials in the coming months.

About CR665
CR665 is the lead development candidate from a series of highly selective peripheral kappa opioid receptor agonists. In animal studies, CR665 exhibited unprecedented selectivity for the peripheral kappa opioid receptor and superior efficacy in producing pain relief compared to non-selective opioid drugs, such as morphine. In addition, unlike currently marketed non-selective opioid receptor agonists, CR665 does not produce inhibition of intestinal transit (ileus), induce respiratory depression, or elicit CNS side effects of euphoria or addiction in animal models. In addition to its potent analgesic effects, preclinical studies also indicate that CR665 possesses anti-inflammatory activities appropriate for potential therapeutic application in diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis.

About Cara Therapeutics
Cara Therapeutics is a privately held biotechnology company focused on developing novel, superior therapeutics to treat pain and inflammation associated with diverse medical conditions. Cara's current pipeline includes near-term clinical drug candidates within a number of classes of peripherally-acting analgesics.

Forward-Looking Statements
Certain statements in this press release are forward-looking statements that involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Such forward-looking statements include statements relating to the therapeutic applications of CR665 and about Cara's strategy, technologies, pre-clinical and clinical programs, and ability to identify and develop drugs, as well as other statements that are not historical facts. Actual events or results may differ materially from Cara's expectations. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the timing, success and cost of Cara's research and clinical studies and Cara's ability to obtain additional financing. These forward-looking statements represent Cara's judgment as of the date of this release. Cara disclaims any intent or obligation to update these forward-looking statements.

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