

BENITEC EXPANDS MANAGEMENT TEAM, SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD AND FORMS UNIQUE CLINICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

18 June 2004

Benitec (ASX:BLT) of Queensland and Sunnyvale, California today announced the appointment of Sally Brashears as Vice President IP, the expansion of its Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and the establishment of its unique Clinical Advisory Committee to focus on Benitec's Hepatitis C program.

John McKinley, Chairman and CEO of Benitec stated "We are very pleased with the recent appointments and are aware of the importance of their individual skills to Benitec. The enlargement of our SAB provides additional expertise in Benitec's current and identified disease targets and the regulatory processes associated with each clinical program. These will now be supported at the clinical level by the new externally sourced members of the Clinical Advisory Committees. The appointment of Sally Brashears is the first of a number of key appointments to our management team, this first covering our critical core patent portfolio. We are building the most experienced management and advisory teams covering all aspects of Benitec's RNAi operations which we intend will become the pathfinder for the future development of RNAi therapeutics."

Key Management Appointment

Sally Brashears has been appointed as Vice President IP, bringing extensive RNAi expertise and dedicated management leadership to Benitec's expanding patent portfolio. Sally has over 10 years of cell and molecular biology patent experience, including work in the DNA and RNAi fields. Formerly patent attorney with Moser, Patterson & Sheridan, LLP of Palo Alto, California, Sally has also acted as Director, Intellectual Property for Clontech Laboratories and Perlegen Sciences, Inc. and recently as outside US patent counsel to the National Stem Cell Centre in Melbourne, Australia. Benitec has the only dedicated RNAi patent estate with 7 issued, and over 65 filed, patents covering 19 jurisdictions. These are the only issued patents covering RNAi applications to animals and humans.

SAB Expansion

Benitec has further expanded its Scientific Advisory Board, with Professor Mark Kay joining as Deputy Chairman. Also joining the SAB is Professor Jo Milner of York University, UK and former Avocel SAB members Dr Robert Lanford and Dr David Russell.

Prof Mark A Kay, MD, PhD – Deputy Chair of SAB

Prof Kay is Director of the Human Gene Therapy Program at Stanford University School of Medicine and Professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and Genetics. He is a founder and is currently President-elect of the American Society of Gene Therapy. He is respected worldwide for his work in gene therapy and RNAi drug development. Prof Kay's laboratory at Stanford University was first to demonstrate the effective *in vivo* use of RNAi as a therapeutic against a mouse hepatitis disease model. His work on viral diseases is considered a seminal step in the advancement of RNAi technology.

Prof Jo Milner, PhD

Jo Milner is currently Yorkshire Cancer Research Professor of Cell Biology and Director YCR P53 Research Group, University of York, UK. Prof Milner is recognized for her pioneering work on the application of RNAi as a therapeutic approach to treat human disease, with particular emphasis on human cancer.

Dr Robert E Lanford, PhD

Dr Lanford is Adjunct Professor in the Department of Microbiology at the University of Texas, Health Science Center in San Antonio and Scientist in the Department of Virology and Immunology at the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio, Texas. He has been conducting research and lecturing in the fields of virology and immunology for over twenty years, particularly in the area of hepatitis virus. Dr Lanford has published over 100 scientific articles in peer review journals, including the *Journal of Virology*, *Virology*, *PNAS USA*, and the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.

Dr David W Russell, MD, PhD

Dr Russell is Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Washington, Seattle, where his research program focuses on stem cells and gene therapies. Dr Russell is renowned within the scientific community for his pioneering work on the use of viral vectors to improve gene targeting rates and the transduction of stem cells. This involves the successful use of modified viral vectors to efficiently deliver nucleic acids to cells.

Clinical Advisory Committee

As part of Benitec’s objective of becoming the leader in the development of RNAi therapeutics, the Company is committed to providing credible and transparent processes to its therapeutic programs. This commitment is now underpinned by the appointment of external MD specialist consultants to a unique Clinical Advisory Committee (CAC) for its Hepatitis C virus program. Committees will also be appointed for each of Benitec’s new clinical programs to ensure that each is reviewed by leading clinicians working in the disease field. The first members of the CAC for the HCV program are Dr Robert Carithers, Dr Emmet Keeffe and Dr Paul J Pockros.

- Dr Robert L Carithers, MD is Director of the Hepatology Program at the University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle.
- Dr Emmet B Keeffe, MD is Chief of Hepatology and Co-Director of the Liver Transplant Program at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.
- Dr Paul J Pockros, MD is the Division Head of Gastroenterology/Hepatology at Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, California.

About Benitec Limited

Benitec Ltd. (ASX: BLT) is an international biotechnology company focused on developing therapeutics to treat serious diseases using its proprietary RNAi technology. It is listed on the Australian Stock Exchange and has its clinical programs centred in Sunnyvale, California.

This press release contains forward-looking statements which reflect the Company's current expectation regarding future events. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties. Actual events could differ materially from those projected herein and depend on a number of factors including the success of the Company's research strategy, the applicability of the discoveries made therein, the successful and timely completion of clinical studies and the uncertainties related to the regulatory process.

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