



## **Voyager Therapeutics Joins Michael J. Fox Foundation Initiatives and Education Campaigns to Accelerate the Development of New therapies and a Cure for Parkinson's Disease**

December 17, 2018

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 17, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Voyager Therapeutics, Inc. (NASDAQ: VYGR), a clinical-stage gene therapy company focused on developing life-changing treatments for severe neurological diseases, today announced joining multiple partnerships with The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) including the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI) and the Parkinson's Disease Education Consortium (PDEC). Today's announcement with MJFF expands Voyager's commitment to the Parkinson's disease community by supporting high quality educational programs and ongoing research.

"We are dedicated to finding a cure for Parkinson's disease and accelerating breakthroughs patients can feel in their everyday lives," said Sohini Chowdhury, deputy chief executive officer of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. "As part of this effort, we developed a strategy that involves building relationships with industry as research partners and as sponsors of the Foundation's scientific and educational programs. This public-private partnership encompasses our PPMI and PDEC programs, which have added significant value to Parkinson's drug development, and we welcome Voyager Therapeutics as a partner in these efforts."

"We are thrilled to join The Michael J. Fox Foundation's efforts to bring industry, advocacy, and academia together through its PPMI and PDEC initiatives," said Andre Turenne, president and chief executive officer of Voyager Therapeutics. "The Michael J. Fox Foundation is a world-class organization and shares our mission to improve the lives of Parkinson's disease patients, their families, and care partners."

### **About the Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative**

[PPMI](#) is a landmark natural history study launched in 2010 to help identify, develop, and validate biomarkers of Parkinson's disease progression to further the development of disease-modifying therapies. PPMI is funded by MJFF and a consortium of key industry players, non-profit organizations, and private individuals and involves active participation of stakeholders from government, the biopharmaceutical industry, and academia to collectively design, implement and fund this comprehensive program. With involvement from more than 30 clinical sites in 11 countries and more than 1,000 participants, PPMI collects and examines clinical and biologic measures to track disease progression in early-stage Parkinson's and prodromal patients and certain genetic populations for use in clinical trials of disease-modifying therapies. Voyager representatives will join PPMI's Industry Scientific Advisory Board, which serves as an independent forum for all PPMI industry partners and is closely involved in the design and execution of the project.

### **About the Parkinson's Disease Education Consortium**

Launched in 2016, [PDEC](#) is an alliance between MJFF and industry partners committed to patient and caregiver knowledge. PDEC supports the development of MJFF's evergreen educational programs (e.g., Third Thursdays Webinar series) and spotlights annual campaigns focused on addressing unmet needs in Parkinson's community education. Past campaigns have included a narrative on the Parkinson's disease patient journey, a companion pack for clinical trial volunteers, and study teams to address research participation, and a research initiative aimed at addressing barriers to communication between patients, care-givers and healthcare practitioners.

In 2019 and 2020, MJFF, in partnership with PDEC, will lead an effort to bring education to people with Parkinson's, supporters, and caregivers through local community activities and broad targeted educational content that speaks to all aspects of the Parkinson's experience. MJFF aims to harness the power of peer-to-peer interaction in empowering community members to take action and live well with Parkinson's.

### **About Voyager's VY-AADC Gene Therapy for Parkinson's Disease**

VY-AADC is an investigational gene therapy product designed to deliver the *AADC* gene directly into neurons of the putamen where dopamine receptors are located, bypassing the substantia nigra neurons and enabling the neurons of the putamen to produce the AADC enzyme to convert levodopa into dopamine. With this approach, VY-AADC has the potential to durably enhance the conversion of levodopa to dopamine and provide clinically meaningful improvements by restoring motor function in patients and improving symptoms following a single administration.

Voyager recently initiated the Phase 2 RESTORE-1 trial in patients who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease for at least four years, are not responding adequately to oral medications, and have at least three hours of OFF time during the day as measured by a validated self-reported patient diary.

For additional information regarding Voyager's RESTORE-1 Phase 2 clinical trial with its gene therapy VY-AADC for the treatment of Parkinson's disease, please use the following [link](#) or email Voyager at [clinicaltrials@vygr.com](mailto:clinicaltrials@vygr.com).

The FDA granted Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy (RMAT) designation for VY-AADC for the treatment of Parkinson's disease in patients with motor fluctuations that are refractory to medical management. RMAT designation is an expedited program for the advancement and approval of regenerative medicine products, including gene therapy products. RMAT designation was granted based on clinical data from the Phase 1b trial with VY-AADC in patients with Parkinson's disease. During this trial, one-time administrations of VY-AADC demonstrated robust and durable improvements in patients' motor function along with substantial reductions in use of daily oral levodopa and other Parkinson's disease medications. Infusions of

VY-AADC have been well-tolerated in this trial with no vector-related serious adverse events reported to date.

### About Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive and debilitating neurodegenerative disease that affects approximately 1,000,000 people in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> and seven to 10 million people worldwide<sup>2</sup>. While the underlying cause of Parkinson's disease in most patients is unknown, the motor symptoms of the disease arise from a loss of neurons in the midbrain that produce the neurotransmitter dopamine. Declining levels of dopamine and the enzyme needed to convert levodopa to dopamine in this region of the brain, the putamen, leads to the motor symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease including tremors, slow movement or loss of movement, rigidity, and postural instability. Additional motor symptoms during the advanced stages of the disease include falling and difficulty with speech and swallowing, with patients often requiring the daily assistance of a caregiver.

There are currently no therapies that effectively slow or reverse the progression of Parkinson's disease. Levodopa remains the standard of care treatment, with its beneficial effects on symptom control having been discovered over 40 years ago<sup>3</sup>. Patients are generally well-controlled with oral levodopa in the early stages of the disease but become less responsive to treatment as the disease progresses. Patients experience longer periods of reduced mobility and stiffness termed OFF time, or the time when medication is no longer providing benefit, and shorter periods of ON time when their medication is effective.

The progressive motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease are largely due to the death of dopamine neurons in the substantia nigra, a part of the midbrain that converts levodopa to dopamine, in a single step catalyzed by the enzyme AADC. Neurons in the substantia nigra release dopamine into the putamen where the receptors for dopamine reside. In Parkinson's disease, neurons in the substantia nigra degenerate and the enzyme AADC is markedly reduced in the putamen, which limits the brain's ability to convert levodopa to dopamine<sup>4</sup>. The intrinsic neurons in the putamen, however, do not degenerate in Parkinson's disease<sup>5,6</sup>.

### About Voyager Therapeutics

Voyager Therapeutics is a clinical-stage gene therapy company focused on developing life-changing treatments for severe neurological diseases. Voyager is committed to advancing the field of AAV gene therapy through innovation and investment in vector engineering and optimization, manufacturing and dosing and delivery techniques. Voyager's pipeline focuses on severe neurological diseases in need of effective new therapies, including Parkinson's disease, a monogenic form of ALS called SOD1, Huntington's disease, Friedreich's ataxia, neurodegenerative diseases related to defective or excess aggregation of tau protein in the brain including Alzheimer's disease and severe, chronic pain. Voyager has strategic collaborations with Sanofi Genzyme and AbbVie. Founded by scientific and clinical leaders in the fields of AAV gene therapy, expressed RNA interference and neuroscience, Voyager Therapeutics is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

### Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements for the purposes of the safe harbor provisions under The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and other federal securities laws. The use of words such as "may," "might," "will," "would," "should," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "undoubtedly," "project," "intend," "future," "potential," or "continue," and other similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. For example, all statements Voyager makes regarding the initiation, timing, progress and reporting of results of its preclinical programs and clinical trials and its research and development programs, its ability to advance its AAV-based gene therapies into, and successfully initiate, enroll and complete, clinical trials, the potential clinical utility of its product candidates, its ability to continue to develop its gene therapy platform, its ability to develop manufacturing capability for its products and successfully transition its manufacturing process, its ability to perform under existing collaborations with, among others, Sanofi Genzyme and AbbVie and to add new programs to its pipeline, its ability to enter into new partnerships or collaborations, the sufficiency of its cash resources and the regulatory pathway of, and the timing or likelihood of its regulatory filings and approvals for, any of its product candidates, are forward looking. All forward-looking statements are based on estimates and assumptions by Voyager's management that, although Voyager believes to be reasonable, are inherently uncertain. All forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those that Voyager expected. Such risks and uncertainties include, among others, the initiation and conduct of preclinical studies and clinical trials; the availability of data from clinical trials; the expectations for regulatory communications, submissions and approvals; the continued development of the gene therapy platform; Voyager's scientific approach and general development progress; and the availability or commercial potential of Voyager's product candidates. These statements are also subject to a number of material risks and uncertainties that are described in Voyager's most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, as updated by its subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date on which it was made. Voyager undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law.

---

<sup>1</sup> Willis et al, *Neuroepidemiology*.2010;34:143-151

<sup>2</sup> [www.pdf.org/en/parkinson\\_statistics](http://www.pdf.org/en/parkinson_statistics)

<sup>3</sup> Poewe W, et al, *Clinical Interventions in Aging*.2010;5:229-238.

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd, *J Pharmacol Exp Ther*. 1975;195:453-464, Nagatsu, *J Neural Transm Suppl*.2007

<sup>5</sup> Cold Spring Harb Perspect Med 2012;2:a009258

<sup>6</sup> Braak et al, *Cell Tissue Res*.2004;318:121-134

Investor Relations:

Matt Osborne

Vice President of Corporate Affairs, Communications and Investor Relations

857-259-5353

[mosborne@vygr.com](mailto:mosborne@vygr.com)

Media:

Sheryl Seapy  
W2O Group  
949-903-4750  
[sseapy@w2ogroup.com](mailto:sseapy@w2ogroup.com)

Voyager Therapeutics, Inc.