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# ContraFect Awarded $7.2 Million USAMRDC Grant to Support the Advancement of Lysin Candidate CF-296

YONKERS, N.Y., June 06, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- **ContraFect Corporation (Nasdaq:CFRX)**, a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on the discovery and development of biologic therapies for life-threatening, drug-resistant infectious diseases, today announced that the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) has awarded the Company $7.2 million in funding from the Military Infectious Diseases Research Program (MIDRP), United States Army Medical Research and Development Command (USAMRDC) over the course of three years to advance its lysin candidate, CF-296, through IND-enabling studies after which it may enter the clinic. CF-296 was discovered while the Company was working on its platform of direct lytic agents (DLAs). Lysins, a new class of DLAs, are antimicrobial biologics with a novel mechanism of action which results in the rapid killing of target bacteria, eradication of biofilms and synergy with conventional antibiotics.

“We are very pleased to receive significant funding from USAMRDC to advance our next lysin candidate, CF-296,” said Roger J. Pomerantz, MD, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of ContraFect. “This further validates our novel therapeutic approach, using direct lytic agents, which are non-antibiotic anti-infective agents, as a new medical modality, following the compelling clinical data reported from our Phase 2 trial of exebacase in patients with *Staph* bacteremia.”

CF-296 is an engineered variant of exebacase, which recently demonstrated the potential to improve clinical outcomes for patients with *Staphylococcus aureus* (*Staph aureus*) bloodstream infections, particularly for those with methicillin-resistant *Staph aureus* (MRSA) in a Phase 2 study, where the responder rate was 43% higher in patients treated with exebacase as compared to those patients treated with antibiotics alone. ContraFect has found CF-296 to have rapid, potent activity against *Staph aureus* and related biofilms. The grant will support further *in vitro* and *in vivo* testing to further evaluate the potential to develop CF-296 as a treatment for invasive bone and joint infections caused by *Staph aureus*.

Cara Cassino, M.D., Chief Medical Officer and Executive Vice President of Research and Development at ContraFect, remarked, “Promising preclinical data suggest that CF-296 may be suitable for development as a novel therapy for bone and joint infections caused by *Staph*

*aureus*, such as prosthetic joint infections, which are notoriously poorly responsive to current antibiotics, typically require surgery, and are associated with substantial morbidity including long-term disability. We believe direct lytic agents provide the opportunity to make meaningful improvements to the treatment paradigm for patients infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria."

**About ContraFect:**

ContraFect is a biotechnology company focused on discovering and developing differentiated biologic therapies for life-threatening, drug-resistant infectious diseases, particularly those treated in hospital settings. An estimated 700,000 deaths worldwide each year are attributed to antimicrobial-resistant infections. We intend to address life threatening infections using our therapeutic product candidates from our platform of direct lytic agents (DLAs), which include lysins and amurin peptides. Lysins are a new therapeutic class of DLAs derived from bacteriophage which are recombinantly produced, antimicrobial proteins with a novel mechanism of action associated with the rapid killing of target bacteria, eradication of biofilms and synergy with conventional antibiotics. We believe that the properties of our lysins will make them suitable for targeting antibiotic-resistant organisms, such as *Staph aureus* and *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa (P. Aeruginosa)*, which can cause serious infections such as bacteremia, pneumonia and osteomyelitis. We have clinically completed a Phase 2 clinical trial for the treatment of *Staph aureus* bacteremia, including endocarditis with our lead lysin candidate, exebacase (CF-301) which is the first lysin to enter clinical studies in the U.S.

**About Exebacase (CF-301):**

Exebacase (CF-301) is a recombinantly-produced lysin (cell wall hydrolase enzyme) with potent bactericidal activity against *Staph aureus*, a major cause of blood stream infections (BSIs) also known as bacteremia. Exebacase has the potential to be a first-in-class treatment for *Staph aureus* bacteremia. It has a novel, rapid, and specific mechanism of bactericidal action against *Staph aureus*. By targeting a conserved region of the cell wall that is vital to bacteria, resistance is less likely to develop to exebacase. In addition, *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments have shown that exebacase is highly active against biofilms which complicate *Staph aureus* infections. Exebacase was licensed from The Rockefeller University and is being developed at ContraFect.

**About the USAMRDC Grant:**

The U.S. Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity, 839 Chandler Street, Fort Detrick MD 21702-5014 is the awarding and administering acquisition office. The work is supported by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, through the Military Infectious Diseases Research Program-Broad Agency Announcement for Extramural Medical Research under Award No. W81XWH-19-1-0139. Opinions, interpretations, conclusions and recommendations herein are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by the Department of Defense. In the conduct of research, the investigator adheres to the laws of the United States and regulations of the Department of Agriculture, NIH Guidelines for research involving recombinant DNA molecules and the CDC-NIH Guide for Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories.

**Forward-Looking Statements:**

This press release contains, and our officers and representatives may make from time to time, “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the U.S. federal securities laws. Forward-looking statements can be identified by words such as “projects,” “may,” “will,” “could,” “would,” “should,” “believes,” “expects,” “anticipates,” “estimates,” “intends,” “plans,” “potential,” “promise” or similar references to future periods. Examples of forward-looking statements in this release include, without limitation, statements regarding the Company’s ability to discover and develop differentiated biological therapies for life-threatening, drug-resistant infectious diseases, the Company’s ability to address life threatening infections using its therapeutic product candidates from its DLA platform which includes lysins and amurins, whether lysins are a new therapeutic class of DLAs derived from bacteriophage which are recombinantly produced, antimicrobial biologics with a novel mechanism of action associated with the rapid killing of target bacteria, eradication of biofilms and synergy with conventional antibiotics, whether the USAMRDC funding is significant, it validates the Company’s approach of using DLAs as a new medical modality, and whether that approach is novel, whether the Phase 2 clinical data is compelling, whether exebacase demonstrated the potential to improve clinical outcomes for patients with *Staph aureus* bloodstream infections, particularly for those with MRSA in a Phase 2 study, whether CF-296 has rapid, potent activity against *Staph aureus* and related biofilms, whether the grant will support *in vitro* and *in vivo* testing to further evaluate the potential to develop CF-296 as a treatment for invasive bone and joint infections caused by *Staph aureus,* including prosthetic joint infections, whether CF-296 preclinical data is promising, whether DLAs provide the opportunity to make meaningful improvements to the treatment paradigm for patients infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria, whether the properties of the Company’s lysins will make them suitable for targeting antibiotic-resistant organisms, such as *Staph aureus* and *P. aeruginosa,* whether exebacase has the potential to be a first-in-class treatment for *Staph aureus* bacteremia, whether exebacase is highly active against biofilms which complicate *Staph aureus* infections and whether the Company actually receives the $7.2 million. Forward-looking statements are statements that are not historical facts, nor assurances of future performance. Instead, they are based on ContraFect’s current beliefs, expectations and assumptions regarding the future of its business, future plans, strategies, projections, anticipated events and trends, the economy and other future conditions. Because forward-looking statements relate to the future, they are subject to inherent risks, uncertainties and changes in circumstances that are difficult to predict and many of which are beyond ContraFect’s control, including those detailed in ContraFect's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Actual results may differ from those set forth in the forward-looking statements. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ include, among others, our ability to develop treatments for drug-resistant infectious diseases. Any forward-looking statement made by ContraFect in this press release is based only on information currently available and speaks only as of the date on which it is made. Except as required by applicable law, ContraFect expressly disclaims any obligations to publicly update any forward-looking statements, whether written or oral, that may be made from time to time, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

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