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ProMIS Neurosciences identifies multiple novel targets on SARS CoV-2 for development of a highly accurate COVID-19 antibody test

A validated COVID-19 antibody test could be available in the summer of 2020

TORONTO, Ontario and CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 12, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- ProMIS Neurosciences, Inc. (TSX: PMN) (OTCQB: ARFXF), a company with unique, core technology to predict novel targets on the molecular surface of complex proteins, has advanced its program to develop a high-throughput, highly accurate test for detection of antibodies to SARS CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19. ProMIS has identified 18 potential antibody targets unique to the spike protein halo of SARS CoV-2. These targets, called conformational peptide antigens, will be synthesized by a specialized contract laboratory organization over the coming weeks for subsequent testing and validation in the serology lab of Dr. Hans Frykman at the University of British Columbia. This antibody test could become commercially available in the near term.

As states, provinces and territories reopen amidst ongoing pandemic-related challenges, an accurate antibody test measuring levels of immunity to COVID-19 remains an essential but unmet need. Experts agree that an antibody test for COVID-19 must be selective (specific) for only SARS CoV-2, the virus responsible for the pandemic. However, test accuracy continues to be a problem due to cross-reactivity with other coronaviruses, including four viruses that cause the common cold. Dr. Hans Frykman, a globally recognized neuro-immunologist and his team, will evaluate serology test performance in a high throughput assay with each of the 18 peptide antigens in order to validate and select the best among them, aiming to achieve 100% sensitivity and 99.9% specificity for the virus causing COVID-19.

"As antibody tests for COVID-19 flood the market, the accuracy of these tests has emerged as a seemingly insurmountable barrier to resuming our lives with confidence," said Dr. Elliot Goldstein, president and CEO of ProMIS Neurosciences. "Developing an accurate antibody test selective for a single virus amongst a larger family of similar viruses is very challenging using today's tools. A highly accurate test for COVID-19 requires the ability to identify unique target protein structures, our main area of expertise by virtue of our work with the misfolded proteins that drive neurodegenerative diseases. We expect development of a highly accurate test and anticipate commercial availability shortly thereafter."

About ProMIS Neurosciences

ProMIS Neurosciences, Inc. is a development stage biotechnology company whose unique core technology is the ability to rationally predict the site and shape (conformation) of novel targets known as Disease Specific Epitopes on the molecular surface of proteins. In the infectious disease setting, these disease-specific epitopes represent peptide antigens that can be used as an essential component to create accurate and sensitive serological assays to detect the presence of antibodies that arise in response to a specific infection, such as COVID-19. These peptide antigens can also be used to create potential therapeutic antibodies to treat active infection, as well as serve as the basis for development of vaccines. ProMIS is headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, with offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts. ProMIS is listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol PMN, and on the OTCQB Venture Market under the symbol ARFXF.

Visit us at www.promisneurosciences.com or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

To learn more about COVID-19 antibody testing listen to the podcast, Saving Minds, at [iTunes](#) or [Spotify](#).

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Source: ProMIS Neurosciences Inc.