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OPKO To Present Data on Next Generation Anti-Angiogenic VEGF_{165b}-Sparing siRNA at Association for Research and Vision in Ophthalmology (ARVO 2009) Meeting

MIAMI--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- OPKO Health, Inc. (NYSE Alternext US:OPK) today announced that it will present initial data on the characterization of its next generation anti-VEGF siRNA molecules. These new proprietary siRNA's are designed to inhibit the angiogenic Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor A₁₆₅ (VEGFA₁₆₅ isoform) but spare the anti-angiogenic VEGFA_{165b} isoform.

VEGFA₁₆₅ is known to play a critical role in diseases of the eye where the underlying cause of the problem is abnormal growth of blood vessels, such as in wet Age-related Macular Degeneration. To the contrary, data show that VEGFA_{165b} is an inhibitor of abnormal vessel growth.

"We are pleased to present data regarding our new siRNA molecules that spare the so-called VEGF_{165b} at the upcoming ARVO 2009 meeting in Fort Lauderdale," said Phillip Frost, M.D., Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of OPKO Health. "We believe that these new proprietary molecules have the potential to significantly improve clinical outcomes in patients with ocular neovascularization." Dr. Frost further noted that the synthesis of these new siRNA's adds significant breadth to OPKO's already substantial intellectual property portfolio in the RNAi space.

About OPKO Health, Inc.

Miami-based OPKO is a specialty healthcare company engaged in the development, marketing, and sales of novel agents and both diagnostic and therapeutic devices for the management of ophthalmic diseases. For more information visit the company's website at www.opko.com.

This press release contains "forward-looking statements," as that term is defined under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 (PSLRA), which statements may be identified by words such as "expects," "plans," "projects," "will," "may," "anticipates," "believes," "should," "intends," "estimates," and other words of similar meaning, including statements regarding our product development efforts, our ability to significantly improve clinical outcomes in patients, and our ability to develop a preclinical pipeline of novel agents for ophthalmic diseases, as well as other non-historical statements about our expectations, beliefs or intentions regarding our business, technologies and products, financial condition, strategies or prospects. Many factors could cause our actual activities or results to differ materially from the activities and results anticipated in forward-looking statements. These factors include those described in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission,

as well as risks inherent in funding, developing and obtaining regulatory approvals of new, commercially-viable and competitive products and treatments. In addition, forward-looking statements may also be adversely affected by general market factors, competitive product development, product availability, federal and state regulations and legislation, the regulatory process for new products and indications, manufacturing issues that may arise, patent positions and litigation, among other factors. The forward-looking statements contained in this press release speak only as of the date the statements were made, and we do not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking statements. We intend that all forward-looking statements be subject to the safe-harbor provisions of the PSLRA.

Source: OPKO Health, Inc.