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Press Release

Antisense Pharma Presents Positive Preclinical Results of AP 12009 in Pancreatic Cancer at ECCO 2003

REGENSBURG, GERMANY - October 2nd, 2003. Antisense Pharma GmbH presented preclinical data of AP 12009 in pancreatic carcinoma at last week's 12th European Cancer Conference (ECCO) in Copenhagen, Denmark, Sep 21st - 25th, 2003. Based on these results a clinical trial with AP 12009 in pancreatic carcinoma is currently in preparation.

The company's lead product AP 12009 is already being studied in phase IIb for the treatment of high-grade glioma. AP 12009 efficiently represses the production of TGF- β 2 (transforming growth factor- β 2). The antisense oligonucleotide AP 12009 interacts with the mRNA of TGF- β 2 thus inhibiting the production and in consequence the functional activity of the cancer protein at its earliest.

Like in brain tumors the aggressiveness and poor prognosis in pancreatic cancer strongly correlates with the over-expression of the most potent immunosuppressant, TGF- β 2. By inducing immunosuppression, promoting metastasis and increasing tumor growth TGF- β 2 plays a unique role in the disease progression of pancreatic cancer.

"The exciting results presented at the ECCO show that the targeted inhibition of TGF- β 2 by AP 12009 restores the immune cell-mediated cytotoxicity and suppresses the proliferation and the migration in pancreatic carcinoma" said Dr. Karl-Hermann Schlingensiepen, Chief Executive Officer of Antisense Pharma GmbH.

"Based on the preclinical data and the good drug safety profile of AP 12009 in toxicology studies we are now preparing a phase I/II clinical study with systemic application of AP 12009 as a multimodal therapeutic approach for the treatment of pancreatic cancer" reported Dr. Gerhard Stauder, Chief Scientific Officer.

Pancreatic cancer ranks as the fourth most frequent cause of cancer related deaths. This is due to the lack of effective treatment options available. More than 225,000 pancreatic cancer patients will be newly diagnosed worldwide in 2003. The initial symptoms are generally non-specific, thus more than 80% of tumors are being diagnosed very late in the disease progression. Five-year survival rates are among the worst of any neoplasms and average 4%.

Antisense Pharma GmbH is the leading European company in antisense therapeutics located in Regensburg, Germany. The company focuses on the development of novel antisense drugs for the treatment of malignant cancers.

This press release contains forward-looking statements with respect to the future business of Antisense Pharma GmbH. By their nature, forward-looking statements and forecasts involve risks and uncertainties because they relate to events and depend on circumstances that could occur in the future. There are a number of factors that could cause actual results and developments to differ materially. Antisense Pharma GmbH disclaims any intent or obligation to update any of these forward-looking statements.