Apellis Pharmaceuticals to acquire Potentia Pharmaceuticals.

CRESTWOOD, KY – November 20, 2014 - Apellis Pharmaceuticals announced today that it entered into an agreement to acquire Potentia Pharmaceuticals. As part of the acquisition agreement, Apellis obtained the necessary intellectual property rights to develop its complement inhibitor drug compound (APL-2) in ophthalmology and plans its first clinical trial in dry age-related macular degeneration (dry AMD).

Complement inhibition is the only mechanism thus far to show reductions in the growth of dry AMD. Potentia was the first company to develop a complement inhibitor for the treatment of AMD. APL-2 has the same mechanism of action as Potentia's original drug compound but has a significantly improved half-life in the eye. APL-2 is in late preclinical development in ophthalmology and is expected to enter Phase II clinical testing in patients with AMD by the middle of 2015.

Cedric Francois, MD, PhD and CEO of Apellis commented, "We are delighted to be back in retinal drug development. Ophthalmology is a unique therapeutic area that is very dear to us. We have learned much about complement since our first venture in this area a decade ago, and have great hopes that complement inhibition will be the first effective treatment for patients with dry AMD." Phil Rosenfeld, MD, a retinal specialist at Bascom Palmer and advisor to Apellis, added: "There's overwhelming scientific and clinical evidence to suggest that complement inhibition should slow the progression of dry AMD. I'm optimistic that based on its mechanism of action and its target within the complement cascade, APL-2 offers us the best chance to help our AMD patients. "

About Apellis
Apellis is a clinical stage immunotherapy company and targets the complement pathways to correct auto-immune conditions. Apellis was spun out of Potentia Pharmaceuticals, the first company to test complement-inhibiting therapies in AMD. Apellis will seek to further explore the interface between complement and adaptive immunity in a range of indications, including paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH), AMD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), as well as graft-versus-host disease (GvHD), ABO-incompatible transplantation, periodontitis and ischemia reperfusion injury. Website: www.apellis.com

About APL-2
APL-2 is a next-generation inhibitor of the class of compstatin derivatives with improved physicochemical properties. APL-2 is currently being tested in a number of Phase I clinical trials and has received Orphan Drug Designation from the FDA to treat PNH. APL-2 inhibits complement at the levels of complement factor C3, thus blocking all downstream effector pathways of the complement cascade.

About Age-related Macular Degeneration

Age-related macular degeneration is the leading cause of severe vision loss in people over the age of 65 in the United States and other western countries. In the United States, about 1.75 million people have the advanced forms of AMD. The advanced forms of AMD are classified into either choroidal neovascularization (neovascular or exudative AMD, called “wet” AMD) or dry AMD. Dry AMD is responsible for approximately 20% of all legal cases of blindness in North America. While there is treatment for wet AMD with anti-VEGF therapies such as ranibizumab (Lucentis®) and aflibercept (Eylea®), no therapy exists for dry AMD. Complement inhibition is the only mechanism to have shown a slowing of the rate of progression of dry AMD, as shown by Genentech / Roche with lampalizumab in a Phase II clinical trial (MAHALO) published in 2013.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

David Watson
Vice-President of Corporate Development
Apellis Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
(502) 241-4114
davidw@apellis.com