REPO-STROKE II, THE THREE-COMPONENT DRUG REPURPOSING STUDY, STARTS INCLUSION OF PATIENTS

Maastricht and Essen, September 6, 2022 – REPO-STROKE II, a Phase IIa clinical study in patients with acute ischemic stroke, has enrolled its first patient. The trial, which investigates a triple combination of three drugs approved for other therapeutic uses (the pulmonary hypertension drug, riociguat; the antipsychotic, perphenazine; and the thyroid drug, propylthiouracil) on top of standard therapy, will include up to 28 patients. REPO-STROKE is part of REPO-TRIAL, a 5-year project funded by a Horizon 2020 research grant (No. 777111) from the European Commission.

"Ischemic stroke is a medical emergency for which no proven treatment exists apart from dissolving the obstructing blood clot in the brain, which is useful only within a brief period after the stroke has occurred, and is not always possible," explains Dr. Benedikt Frank, the senior physician heading the study at the Department of Neurology, University of Essen. "Our aim is to limit the post-ischemic damage that occurs to the affected brain areas regardless of such interventions. Having conducted a preliminary clinical trial with our triple combination in healthy volunteers without incidents, we now feel confident to proceed with the target patient population."

"REPO-TRIAL is about demonstrating that network medicine, supported by advanced bioinformatics, and drug repurposing can be a perfect match when it comes to developing mechanism-based, curative treatments for medical conditions with high unmet medical need," said REPO-TRIAL coordinator Prof. Harald H.H.H.W. Schmidt, Department Head of Pharmacology and Personalized Medicine at Maastricht University who also represents his institution as the REPO-STROKE II sponsor. "We have only started to explore the potential of known drugs beyond their approved field of use, especially in carefully selected synergistic combinations."

REPO-TRIAL consortium members include the pharmacology department at Maastricht University (The Netherlands), university clinics at Essen, Hannover, and Wittenberg (Germany), and the bioinformatics departments at Newcastle University (United Kingdom) and Hamburg University (Germany); while Austrian industry participants Biocrates Life Sciences and H.M. Pharma Consultancy provide invaluable expertise in the fields of biomarkers, patenting, regulatory affairs, and public dissemination of results. Program management services are provided by another consortium member, concentris research management (Germany).

Interviews with the project coordinator, Prof. Harald Schmidt, can be arranged through the REPO-TRIAL project management office (see below).

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