



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Pantherics Incorporated Awarded STTR Funding from the National Institutes of Health to Advance Asthma Drug Research**

*Grant funding will support preclinical studies of a newly discovered medication to control asthma without the use of inhalers*

LA JOLLA, CA AND MILWAUKEE, WI – May 7, 2019 -- Pantherics Incorporated ([www.pantherics.com](http://www.pantherics.com)) received a \$224,756 Phase I Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to advance research on a fundamentally novel asthma control drug. The first-in-class drug, MIDD0301, was discovered by researchers at the Milwaukee Institute for Drug Discovery at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (WI) and Columbia University (NY). Funding from this STTR grant will be used to advance MIDD0301 to IND enabling pre-clinical studies.

Dr. Alexander Arnold, Pantherics' Chief Scientific Officer, commented, "MIDD0301 is an exciting new approach to control asthma symptoms without the adverse effects of steroids and improperly used inhalers. A key innovation is our discovery of a single drug compound that effectively suppresses lung inflammation and relaxes bronchoconstriction, two hallmarks of clinical asthma."

The STTR is a highly competitive grant program that reserves a percentage of federal R&D funding for awards that link US small businesses with nonprofit research institutions. In this instance, Pantherics formed a collaborative research arrangement with UW-Milwaukee and Dr. James Cook, whose MIDD medicinal chemistry laboratory first optimized the synthesis of MIDD0301. Pantherics also has independent research laboratories at UW-Milwaukee. Dr. Douglas Stafford, Pantherics' President, notes, "The NIH/STTR grant gives us important support to translate the discovery research carried out at UW-Milwaukee and Columbia to later stages of drug development."

About asthma treatment:

Despite the availability of numerous controller medications, asthma treatment remains a significant unmet medical need. Asthma afflicts 25 million Americans (~8% of population), is the most common chronic disease in children, and the third leading cause of childhood hospitalizations. Low-dose inhaled corticosteroid (with or without a long-acting  $\beta$ 2-agonist) inhalers are the mainstays of asthma treatment. However, inhalers are often used incorrectly, especially among children, diminishing treatment effectiveness in many patients. To address the unmet therapeutic need, MIDD0301 is being developed for first-line, oral asthma treatment and for steroid resistant disease and would compete in the \$28.3 billion (expected 2022) global asthma drug market.

About Pantherics Incorporated:

Pantherics Incorporated (a privately held company) is leading the creation of a new category of therapy based on peripheral GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor modulation. Pantherics has developed a discovery platform and uses a library of novel chemical entities that target GABA<sub>A</sub> receptors, but do not cross the blood brain barrier, thereby avoiding central nervous system effects associated with GABA activation. GABA<sub>A</sub> receptors are distributed widely in peripheral tissues, including smooth muscle, immune cells, and peripheral sensory neurons. The platform can provide GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor subunit specificity to allow relative tissue selective targeting. GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor modulation can uniquely address diseases where inflammation, smooth muscle reactivity, and sensory nerve activation intersect, including pulmonary, gastrointestinal, bladder, and others.

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