

## **Merrion CEO, John Lynch, Addresses Biobusiness Conference, Geneva, Switzerland.**

**Geneva, 18 February 2009.** Speaking at the BioBusiness conference in Geneva today, John Lynch, CEO of publicly listed Merrion Pharmaceuticals, Dublin, (IEX:MERR) said, "Merrion has developed a unique patented technology (GIPET™) which can be used to develop high potential products which meet the pipeline needs of pharmaceutical companies. We have several high potential products in development and we recently secured two license deals with a well-established pharma partner.

John Lynch stressed the significant commercial opportunities, which can be created by making drugs orally available – as opposed to injectable – and this is the core benefit of Merion's GIPET™ technology. He said, "with the use of GIPET™ we are creating oral drug delivery products which meet the needs of a significant number of patients who want the oral alternative to injections. The oral products also avoid infection risks, has a much more favourable absorption ratio and can reach a greater number of patients".

John Lynch referred specifically to Merrion's Orazol (MER-101), which is the tablet version of the Blockbuster intravenous drug Zometa (Novartis). The underlying drug, zoledronic acid, is used for treatment of bone metastases, osteoporosis and has recently been successfully trialed in early stage breast cancer. Trials have shown that Orazol, delivered orally, can deliver the equivalent bioavailability to Zometa® the injectable equivalent. John Lynch stressed that, "Orazol can be taken orally, once weekly, instead of a monthly infusion. The tablet can also be taken at home instead of in the hospital/clinic setting and this leads to major economic benefits for the patient and or the medical services"

John Lynch, went on to say, "The completion of our Phase IIb study with Orazol™ will be another significant milestone for Merrion. Once the dosing is complete, we will analyse and announce the data. Then we will look to license Orazol to a suitable partner who will complete the product development, file registration and market this product, which we believe has significant potential."

Merrion anticipates that its new patented Orazol™ tablet will bring significant advantages to all stakeholders, including patients, health care professionals and healthcare payors. Availability of Orazol™ tablets will allow a very effective medication be available to a wide patient population in a more efficient, convenient and cost effective formulation.

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**About Merrion:**

Merrion Pharmaceuticals ([www.merrionpharma.com](http://www.merrionpharma.com)) is a publicly listed (IEX: MERR) specialty pharmaceutical company engaged in the development of oral forms (tablets/capsules) of drugs that have poor absorption and are generally given by injection. Merrion was established in 2004 to commercialise various technologies acquired from Élan Corporation, plc. Merrion's patented drug delivery technologies increase bioavailability, by improving absorption in the gastrointestinal tract, of drugs that are otherwise poorly absorbed. This can provide substantial benefit in patient convenience and safety, and might also provide enhanced drug efficacy. Merrion utilises its technology to develop new oral drugs in two ways; it develops its own proprietary drugs using GIPET® and partners with other pharmaceutical companies in developing oral GIPET® formulations of their products.

Merrion currently has four internal product development programs based on its GIPET® technology.

- Orazol (MER 101) is an oral bisphosphonate for oncology indications currently in Phase II development. This product aims to allow cancer patients with bone metastases take a weekly tablet to get the gold standard treatment in this area, rather than an IV infusion.
- Almerol (MER 103) which is also an oral bisphosphonate, for the treatment of osteoporosis, has completed Phase II clinical trials. Based on the market leading drug, this programme aims to provide similar absorption in just 8% of the current dose, with a simplified dosing regimen and an improved side effect profile.
- Acyline (MER 104) is a second oral oncology product for the treatment of prostate cancer, which is in Phase I clinical testing. This programme aims to be the first oral product in the area of GnRH analogues. Products in this class also have several other male/female health indications.
- MER 102 an oral anticoagulant is in preclinical testing. This programme aims to be the first oral product in LMWH class of drugs, and to offer patients the alternative to daily injections.

Merrion has agreements with several pharmaceutical companies.

- On January 16, 2009 Merrion announced the execution of an agreement with Novo Nordisk, a world leader in Diabetes, to develop and commercialize oral forms of Novo Nordisk proprietary GLP-1 receptor agonist using Merrion's proprietary GIPET technology. This was the second license agreement between Merrion and Novo Nordisk, which have combined milestones of \$116 Million for the first product developed which reaches the market, as well as development fees and royalties on sales.

Merrion has operations in Dublin, Ireland and Wilmington, NC, USA.