



## **Innovation in existing biotech medicines to benefit patients**

***Some biologics are being explored to address unmet medical needs in more than 20 indications<sup>i</sup>***

Biotechnology medicines have a high potential for application across additional therapeutic indications, offering the promise to address currently unmet medical needs. This potential stems from the targeted mode of action of biotechnology medicines, which involve molecules or pathways that are common in many seemingly different diseases.

The workshop on “Investing in Medical Progress” at the European Health Forum Gastein (sponsored by Amgen) brings together key stakeholders to advance a public discourse on the value of innovation in the biotech industry, and the association between innovation and the development of additional therapeutic indications from existing biotechnology medicines. Such additional therapeutic indications offer the prospect to address unmet medical needs and improve access to medicines for patient in Europe.

The workshop is set against the backdrop of the *European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009*, which seeks to promote policy debate and raise awareness of the role of innovation in economic, social and personal development.

“The existing structures in Europe support the development of new biotechnology medicines; however there is a need to better support continued research into existing biotechnology medicines which can offer new medical benefits in different therapeutic indications”, commented Ulrik Schulze, Partner and Managing Director, The Boston Consulting Group.

The investment required by industry into the research and development of new indications from existing biotechnology medicines is significant. Additional non-clinical and clinical data are required to support the development and approval of a new indication, with costs reaching in excess of €140 million on average per indication.

“Amgen’s discovery of a new biotechnology medicine for the treatment of the serious autoimmune blood disorder ITP<sup>ii</sup> is a recent example of a biotechnology breakthrough innovation by Amgen scientists”, stated Tamas Suto, MD PhD, Executive Medical Director, International Clinical Development, Amgen. “This novel medicine may offer real benefits in several other indications with unmet medical need, underlining the importance of



advocating constant innovation in exploring the full therapeutic potential of each novel biotechnology medicine.”

Speaking on the situation in Europe, Morten Frank Pedersen, Associate Vice President, Novo Nordisk (Brussels office), stated, “In other countries such as the United States and Japan, support and incentives are provided to encourage research and development into new indications from existing biotechnology medicines. This drive to protect biotechnology innovation needs to be reflected in Europe”.

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, supports this call for a debate on how to stimulate innovation and the identification of ways to deliver the full potential of new biotechnology medicines.

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### **Notes to Editors**

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<sup>i</sup> *Continued Development of Approved Biological Drugs - A Quantitative Study of Additional Indications Approved Postlaunch in the United States*, White Paper, The Boston Consulting Group, December 2007.

<sup>ii</sup> Chronic immune thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP) is a serious autoimmune disorder characterised by low platelet counts in the blood (thrombocytopenia), which can lead to serious bleeding events.