bluebird bio appoints Nicola Redfern as General Manager for UK

Nicola Redfern has been appointed as the general manager of bluebird bio UK, the UK affiliate of the innovative biotech company, headquartered in Cambridge, MA USA, which specialises in the research and development of investigational gene therapies for the treatment of severe genetic diseases and t cell-based immunotherapies for cancer.

Nicola joined bluebird bio in 2017 as UK Director of Access, Value and Evidence Strategy, and takes up her new role at a pivotal stage as the company prepares to launch its first product in Europe in 2019. In October 2018 bluebird bio received acceptance for review of its first marketing authorisation application by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), for its investigational LentiGlobin™ gene therapy for the treatment of adolescents and adults with transfusion-dependent β-thalassaemia (TDT) and non – β^0 / β^0 genotypes. This major milestone brings the company one step closer to its goal of providing patients with the first gene therapy that addresses the underlying genetic cause of TDT, the most severe form of thalassaemia.

"Nicola has played a critical role in our UK operations over the past 18 months. I am delighted that she will now be able to apply her leadership and extensive knowledge of the company and the pharmaceutical sector to our next phase of growth," commented Andrew Obenshain, bluebird bio's head of Europe. *"Nicola's new role, which coincides with the opening of our new office in Basingstoke, is part of our wider strategy to expand our European leadership team as we prepare to launch our gene therapies and transition to a fully integrated discovery, development and commercial company."*

"As an early adopter of gene therapy[1], a strong supporter of the life sciences sector and a country that is committed to improving the lives of people living with rare diseases, the UK is an important strategic market for bluebird bio. Following our potential regulatory approval, we hope it will be one of the first markets where our gene therapies are made available to patients."

Prior to joining bluebird bio, Nicola, has held multiple positions, in sales, marketing, R&D and most recently in market access within the pharmaceutical industry with a career spanning 30 years. Nicola's focus has been very much in the rare disease and cancer space, and she has been actively involved in market access and external affairs for more than two decades, witnessing many changes within the environment. She passionately believes people facing health challenges should have access to new innovations and that the population benefits significantly from the work our industry leads.

Commenting on her appointment, Nicola said: *"I'm looking forward to building on the work the team has done to date and working with my colleagues to build an organisation focused on providing patients and families with access to our gene therapies. bluebird bio has a great culture and I'm excited to be able to lead the UK business as we move closer to launch. As a company committed to the development of gene therapies in areas of high unmet need, we want to support the UK's efforts to tackle rare diseases. It is important we work collaboratively with health professionals, the National Health Service, Health Technology Assessment bodies, policy makers and the community affected to ensure the long-term potential of this new field of medicine is realised."*

[1] The first gene therapy was approved by the NHS in October 2017

Nicola Redfern's appointment follows on from the appointment of other senior leaders in Italy and Germany as the company is growing its presence in the European region.

About bluebird bio, Inc.

With its lentiviral-based gene therapies, T cell immunotherapy expertise and gene editing capabilities, bluebird bio has built a pipeline with broad potential application in severe genetic diseases and cancer.

bluebird bio's gene therapy clinical programmes include investigational treatments for cerebral adrenoleukodystrophy, transfusion-dependent β-thalassemia and sickle cell disease.

bluebird bio's oncology pipeline is built upon the company's lentiviral gene delivery and T cell engineering, with a focus on developing novel T cell-based immunotherapies, including chimeric antigen receptor (CAR T) and T cell receptor (TCR) therapies. The company's lead oncology programmes are anti-BCMA CAR T programs partnered with Celgene.

bluebird bio's discovery research programmes include utilising megaTAL/homing endonuclease gene editing technologies with the potential for use across the company's pipeline.

bluebird bio has operations in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Seattle, Washington; Durham, North Carolina; Zug, Switzerland; Milan, Italy; Basingstoke UK; Munich, Germany and Utrecht, the Netherlands For more information, visit bluebirdbio.com.

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