



**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

## **AVECIA AND ILLUMIGEN ANNOUNCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING AGREEMENT**

Tees Valley, UK & Seattle, WA (October 31 2006) – Avecia and Illumigen Biosciences Inc., a genomics-driven drug discovery and development company, have entered into an agreement for the process development and manufacture of Illumigen’s lead development product, IB657, for the treatment of Hepatitis C and other RNA viruses.

Under the agreement, terms of which have not been disclosed, Avecia will carry out development work to optimize the drug manufacturing process and conduct initial cGMP manufacture of IB657 in Avecia’s ABC1000 biologics facility in the Tees Valley, UK. This manufacturing agreement will provide Illumigen with IB657 in sufficient quantities to complete Phase 1a clinical trials in Hepatitis C-infected patients.

Avecia’s VP Commercial Development, Dr. Stephen Taylor, said: “We are delighted that Illumigen, a company with an innovative approach to drug development, has chosen to work with Avecia on their promising lead program. We believe our excellence in process development will create a scalable manufacturing process to support the clinical advancement of IB657.”

Dr. Charles Magness, President and Chief Operating Officer of Illumigen, said “We are pleased to be working with Avecia on the development of an efficient and cost-effective manufacturing process for IB657. We look forward to the successful completion of the project, and the supply of IB657 for human clinical trials.”

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**About IB657**

*Illumigen's IB657 is a biologic for the treatment of hepatitis C and other RNA virus infections such as respiratory syncytial virus, West Nile virus, and influenza. Illumigen began its search for a hepatitis C drug in 2003 and expects IB657 to enter phase 1 clinical trials in 2007. Based on preclinical data and Illumigen's understanding of the product's novel mechanism of action, the company believes IB657—in contrast to existing antiviral therapeutics—could provide improved efficacy with lower toxicity and be broadly active against several RNA virus families.*

**About Avecia**

*Avecia is a privately owned biotechnology company with recognised leading positions in biopharmaceutical process development and manufacturing, bio-defence vaccines and the manufacture of oligonucleotide medicines. The company's Tees Valley, UK site has been developing processes and making protein-based biologics to cGMP since 1998. Products currently being worked on include medicines targeted at forms of cancer, heart conditions, stroke, growth and blood disorders.*

**About Illumigen Biosciences**

*Illumigen Biosciences Inc. is a privately held biotechnology company that has pioneered a health driven approach to the discovery of therapeutic products for viral and chronic diseases. This approach is based on the identification and exploitation of "beneficial mutations"<sup>™</sup> that naturally occur in some individuals and protect them against disease. Illumigen uses these mutations as a blueprint for the development of effective drugs with minimal toxicity. In addition to hepatitis C, Illumigen is using its technologies to develop drugs to treat obesity and other common diseases. Illumigen is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, where it operates research and clinical development activities. For more information, visit [www.illumigen.com](http://www.illumigen.com).*