Akebia Therapeutics Announces Appointment of Nicholas Grund as Chief Commercial Officer

January 9, 2024

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Jan. 9, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Akebia Therapeutics®, Inc. (Nasdaq: AKBA), a biopharmaceutical company with the purpose to better the lives of people impacted by kidney disease, today announced the appointment of Nicholas Grund as Chief Commercial Officer. Mr. Grund is a seasoned pharmaceutical executive with significant operational, commercial and strategic leadership experience across renal and specialty markets.

"Nik is a profoundly knowledgeable executive with an impressive track record of leading commercial initiatives within the renal market," said John P. Butler, Chief Executive Officer of Akebia. "His operational versatility and breadth of expertise in customer facing roles will be critical for Akebia as we prepare for the vadadustat launch in the U.S., if approved, and continue our goal to maximize Auryxia® (ferric citrate) revenue. We are pleased to welcome Nik to Akebia as he further strengthens our leadership team."

Prior to joining Akebia, Mr. Grund served as President of Eurofins Transplant Genomics where he steered organizational change and facilitated continuous operating efficiency improvements and revenue growth. He was also Chief Commercial Officer of AMAG Pharmaceuticals where he managed commercial activities across four business units. Mr. Grund also held positions of increasing responsibility at Sanofi in its specialty care business and oversaw operations of its renal business unit.

"I am delighted to join the Akebia team at this pivotal moment," said Mr. Grund. "Akebia has already built an impressive renal-focused commercial organization and their deep commitment to patients and connection to providers is evident. I am keen to build on the teams' efforts to prepare for the potential vadadustat launch with the ultimate goal of serving dialysis patients."

About Akebia Therapeutics
Akebia Therapeutics, Inc. is a fully integrated biopharmaceutical company with the purpose to better the lives of people impacted by kidney disease. Akebia was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more information, please visit our website at www.akebia.com, which does not form a part of this release.

About Vadadustat
Vadadustat is an oral hypoxia-inducible factor prolyl hydroxylase inhibitor designed to mimic the physiologic effect of altitude on oxygen availability. At higher altitudes, the body responds to lower oxygen availability with stabilization of hypoxia-inducible factor, which can lead to increased red blood cell production and improved oxygen delivery to tissues. Vadadustat is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Vadadustat is approved in Europe and Australia for the treatment of symptomatic anemia due to CKD in adult patients on chronic maintenance dialysis. In Japan, vadadustat is approved as a treatment for anemia due to CKD in both dialysis-dependent and non-dialysis dependent adult patients.

Forward-Looking Statements
Statements in this press release regarding Akebia Therapeutics, Inc.'s ("Akebia's") strategy, plans, prospects, expectations, beliefs, intentions and goals are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended, and include, but are not limited to, statements regarding: expectations regarding a decision by the FDA on its NDA for vadadustat; Akebia's plans with respect to commercializing vadadustat in the U.S. if approved, including the potential launch thereof; expectations regarding maximizing Auryxia revenue; and its goal to serve patients. The terms "intend," "believe," "plan," "goal," "expect," "potential," "anticipate," "will," "continue," derivatives of these words, and similar references are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. Actual results, performance or experience may differ materially from those expressed or implied by any forward-looking statement as a result of various risks, uncertainties and other factors, including, but not limited to, risks associated with: decisions made by health authorities, such as the FDA, with respect to regulatory filings, including the anticipated FDA decision on the NDA for vadadustat; the potential therapeutic benefits, safety profile, and effectiveness of vadadustat; the potential demand and market potential and acceptance of, as well as coverage and reimbursement related to, Auryxia, including estimates regarding the potential market opportunity; the competitive landscape for Auryxia, including potential generic entrants; the ability of Akebia to attract and retain qualified personnel; the results of preclinical and clinical research; the direct or indirect impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on regulators and Akebia's business, operations, and the markets and communities in which Akebia and its partners, collaborators, vendors and customers operate; manufacturing, supply chain and quality matters and any recalls, write-downs, impairments or other related consequences or potential consequences; and early termination of any of Akebia's collaborations. Other risks and uncertainties include those identified under the heading "Risk Factors" in Akebia's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2023, and other filings that Akebia may make with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in the future. These forward-looking statements (except as otherwise noted) speak only as of the date of this press release, and, except as required by law, Akebia does not undertake, and specifically disclaims, any obligation to update any forward-looking statements contained in this press release.

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