



Gyroscope Therapeutics appoints Dr Soraya Bekkali as Chief Executive Officer

London (UK) – 20 September, 2017: Gyroscope Therapeutics, an ophthalmology company developing genetically defined therapies for retinal diseases such as age related macular degeneration (AMD), is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Soraya Bekkali as Chief Executive Officer and Director of its Board. Soraya brings over 20 years' industry experience with a specific focus in the fields of gene therapy and ophthalmology. Soraya will also serve as Chief Medical Officer.

Prior to joining Gyroscope, Soraya served as Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer of Lysogene, a clinical-stage biotech company developing gene therapy products for central nervous system (CNS) disorders, where she contributed to the successful listing of the company on the Euronext Paris stock exchange in February 2017.

Soraya's previous leadership positions include Global Head of the Ophthalmology Business Unit at Sanofi, where she led Sanofi's ophthalmology strategy towards ocular gene therapy and set up a multidisciplinary team including R&D, market access and business development. She led the in-licensing of two gene therapies for retinal diseases and provided strategic leadership for many of the external academic partnerships, such as MIT, Institut de la Vision, Max Planck Institute and the Foundation for Fighting Blindness.

Soraya's 10-year tenure at Sanofi also included the position of Development Head for a gene therapy Phase III program in advanced peripheral artery disease, and Chief Medical Officer of Fovea Pharmaceuticals, a clinical stage ophthalmology biotech, acquired by Sanofi in 2009.

Soraya graduated as a Medical Doctor from the Paris Medical School in France and began her career as a clinical pharmacologist in academia before joining the pharmaceutical industry, initially with Orphan Europe, a company dedicated to development and commercialization of orphan drugs.

Soraya Bekkali, Chief Executive Officer of Gyroscope, commented, "I am excited to be joining Gyroscope at the Company's founding stage to advance new genetically defined therapies for the treatment of debilitating eye diseases such as age related macular degeneration (AMD). Gyroscope has a unique translational approach to tackling complex diseases such as dry AMD for which there are no therapies today. With the ongoing support from our investor Syncona, I look forward to establishing the Company as a leader in the field."

Chris Hollowood, Chairman of the Board and Chief Investment Officer of Syncona, added, "We founded Gyroscope because the recent convergence of the biological and genetic understanding of the complement system and its relevance in retinal diseases such as dry AMD presented a potential therapeutic solution ideally suited to gene therapy, where Syncona has considerable expertise. The Company is the latest example of Syncona's investment in 'Third Wave' technologies, which have unique capabilities that can address debilitating and previously intractable diseases.

“Gyroscope has assembled a team of scientific founders and experts who are at the forefront of their respective fields in gene therapy, the complement system and ophthalmology. We are extremely pleased to appoint Soraya and look forward to her leadership and extensive gene therapy and ophthalmology clinical experience driving the Company forward.”

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For more information

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Notes to Editors

About Gyroscope Therapeutics

Gyroscope Therapeutics is developing cutting edge, genetically defined therapies for the treatment of eye diseases linked to an unbalanced complement system, a part of the immune system. The Company was founded to capitalise on a convergence of advancements made in the understanding of the complement system’s impact on eye disease, the genetic basis of Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) and gene therapy as a mode of treatment delivery.

The Company’s lead product, GT005, is a novel retinal gene therapy aiming at delivering a targeted, one off treatment for the progressive visual impairment caused by dry AMD in patients by locally modulating complement activity. Gyroscope is building a pipeline of products for blinding eye diseases linked to the complement system.

Gyroscope is a private company headquartered in London, UK and is supported by experts in complement biology, AMD and gene therapy. Investors include Syncona Ltd. and Cambridge Enterprise. Further information can be found at gyroscopetx.com.

About AMD

Age related macular degeneration (AMD) is an eye condition which damages photoreceptors in the macula (central retina), leading to progressive loss of central vision. AMD affects over 35 million patients globally. There are two types of AMD: wet AMD and dry AMD. Dry AMD is the most common form and gradually reduces central vision as retina atrophy expands, causing a growing blank patch in the centre of vision over time. People with advanced atrophic AMD, also called geographic atrophy, report increasing difficulties in reading, driving, recognizing faces, and activities in dim or low light. By contrast with wet AMD, the atrophic form of AMD represents a significant unmet medical need, as there are currently no approved therapies for this blinding condition.