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**Press release**

Aqilion strengthens its portfolio with two innovative pharmaceutical projects in the fields of inflammation and oncology

Aqilion is strengthening its portfolio with the addition of two innovative preclinical projects, Alhena and Alnitak. The company is overseeing the two pharmaceutical projects, which both fall under Aqilion’s new focus area: inflammation at the interface of oncology and immunology.

The Alhena project aims to develop a “PROTAC” drug against a target protein that is central to some cancers. PROTAC is an acronym for proteolysis-targeting chimera (PROTAC). Basically, the technology uses the cell’s own system to break down a certain target protein in the cell, instead of just trying to block its action. The Alhena project involves combination therapy in immuno-oncology with an initial focus on aggressive, treatment-resistant “triple negative breast cancer.”

The Alnitak project has two interesting applications. The goal is to develop drug candidates that bind to a target protein that is essential for both malignant disease development and for inflammatory conditions. A successful project can therefore help to develop new medications to treat orphan drug indications in the field of autoinflammatory diseases, as well as new combination therapies within the field of oncology, primarily intestinal cancer.

Aqilion oversees both projects in collaboration with selected contract research organizations (CROs) specializing in innovative early pharmaceutical projects. The objective is to develop both projects into attractive preclinical projects and then identify a partner for the clinical and commercial development.

“We are proud to announce that Aqilion is now launching two innovative pharmaceutical projects that are both based on new knowledge from the pharmaceutical industry and academic research in the fields of oncology, inflammation and immunology. I am convinced that our new area of focus and approach will result in synergies, greater knowledge within the team and strong collaboration in the future with selected partners and customers in industry. I look forward to reporting the results moving forward,” says Sarah Fredriksson, CEO of AQILION AB.

Aqilion is in a transitional phase that has entailed a new start based on solid analysis and culminating in a forward-looking strategy. Earlier this year, the company changed its name to Aqilion in acknowledgement of this transition. The path has included recruitment of a strengthened team, as well as an inventory and validation of the projects Aqilion had in its portfolio at that time. Willingness to build a business model that delivers, combined with the courage to discontinue those projects that do not meet set criteria, will be crucial to its success.

**For more information, please contact**

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About AQILION AB

Aqilion is a Swedish life science company that identifies unique pharmaceutical projects at an early phase in the drug discovery process and develops them in preparation for clinical trials. The goal is to demonstrate the clinical and commercial potential of the medical innovation to attract industrial partners and buyers, who in turn have the capacity to continue clinical development and take the product to market. The business model is based on involvement at an early stage and close collaboration with the innovator, regardless of whether the project is initiated by an external researcher, internal development project, or industrial partner. Aqilion prefers projects aimed at niche markets. Specialty medications and orphan drugs are of particular interest. Aqilion has its headquarters in Helsingborg. Please visit [www.aqilion.com.](http://www.aqilion.com)