



ABILITA BIO, INC. AWARDED NIH PHASE-I SBIR GRANT TO DISCOVER NON-OPIOID PAIN THERAPEUTICS

SAN DIEGO - September 1, 2018 - Abilita Bio announced the award of \$310,000 through a Phase I SBIR Grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health under award number R43DA047173, to fund the discovery of novel biologic agents that target human voltage-gated sodium (Na_v) channels for the non-opioid treatment of pain.

Chronic pain affects as many as 100 million people in the U.S. alone and results in an estimated combined economic burden that exceeds \$600 billion annually, which eclipses the combined costs of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The prevalence of chronic pain in the U.S. lies at the root of an ongoing epidemic of prescription painkiller abuse, due in part to pain management strategies that rely heavily on the prescription of potent, but addictive opioids such as oxycodone and fentanyl.

“The opioid epidemic in the U.S. takes thousands of lives each year”, says Mauro Mileni, CEO of Abilita Bio. “Opioids are currently the standard of care in the acute and chronic treatment settings, but they are far from ideal due to normal treatment side effects and the potential for addiction and deadly overdose. There is a tremendous unmet need for the discovery of novel pain therapies that can break the dependence on prescription opioids.”

Abilita Bio will use these NIH funds to discover transformative non-opioid chronic pain treatments by targeting members of the voltage-gated sodium (Na_v) channel family that are critically involved in the sensation of pain. Selective Na_v channel antagonists may provide a safe therapeutic alternative to opioids for the treatment of chronic pain and may have further application to post-surgical, neuropathic and cancer pain. By leveraging their proprietary EMP™ platform, the team at Abilita Bio has evolved the world's first stabilized Na_v channel variants that will be used for the discovery of novel biopharmaceuticals.

About Abilita Bio

Abilita Bio, Inc. was founded in June 2014 and is an innovation-driven biotechnology company focused on enabling discovery and development of drugs targeting challenging membrane proteins, including G Protein-Coupled Receptors (GPCRs) and ion channels. Their enabled membrane protein (EMP™) platform technology leverages directed evolution to stabilize targets for use in biologic and small molecule drug discovery campaigns. Abilita Bio has signed research collaboration deals with three top-15 pharma companies and is advancing its own pipeline efforts within the pain, oncology and ophthalmology therapeutic spaces through strategic partnerships with biotech industry leaders.

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