Imara Announces the Appointment of Kenneth Attie, M.D. as Chief Medical Officer

January 20, 2021

Brings 30 years of medical research experience within the biopharmaceutical industry, including Acceleron Pharma and Genentech

BOSTON, Jan. 20, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Imara Inc. (Nasdaq: IMRA), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company dedicated to developing and commercializing novel therapeutics to treat patients suffering from rare inherited genetic disorders of hemoglobin, today announced the appointment of Kenneth Attie, M.D. as Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer. Dr. Attie joins Imara with over 30 years of experience within academia and the biopharmaceutical industry, most recently at Acceleron Pharma, Inc. where he led global clinical development efforts that led to the recent FDA and EMA approvals of a new treatment for patients with rare anemias, including beta-thalassemia.

“We are excited to have the benefit of Ken’s global medical experience as we continue to advance IMR-687 in multiple clinical studies worldwide,” said Rahul Ballal, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Imara. “Ken’s deep expertise in rare anemias and disorders of hemoglobin, combined with his established clinical management experience, will be a great addition to our leadership team.”

“I am excited to be part of the Imara team as we move closer toward our goal of providing novel and accessible treatments for patients suffering from hemoglobinopathies, including sickle cell disease and beta-thalassemia,” commented Dr. Attie. “I look forward to providing medical leadership as Imara continues to advance IMR-687 in its ongoing global Phase 2b trials in those indications, as well as in potential future indications amenable to PDE9 inhibition, such as heart failure with preserved ejection fracture.”

Prior to joining Imara, Dr. Attie served as Vice President of Medical Research at Acceleron Pharma for more than ten years. In this role, he managed clinical studies with several investigational drugs involving TGF-beta superfamily pathways in rare anemias, malignancies, and neuromuscular disorders, leading to regulatory approval of Reblozyl® for patients with transfusion-dependent beta-thalassemia and certain myelodysplastic syndromes. Before Acceleron, Dr. Attie held clinical development and medical affairs leadership roles of increasing responsibility at Altus Pharmaceuticals, Insmed, Inc. and Genentech, Inc. His work in the field of growth hormone and related growth factors contributed to the approval of therapies in numerous indications, including pediatric and adult GH deficiency, chronic renal insufficiency, Turner syndrome, idiopathic short stature and primary IGF-1 deficiency. Dr. Attie, a board-certified pediatric endocrinologist with over 55 publications in peer-reviewed journals, was a visiting professor at the State Institute for Diabetes and Endocrinology in Rio de Janeiro and an assistant clinical professor in the Department of Pediatric Endocrinology at the University of California, San Francisco. He received his education and medical training at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, New York University Medical Center, and University of California, San Francisco Medical Center.

About IMR-687
IMR-687 is a highly selective and potent small molecule inhibitor of PDE9. PDE9 selectively degrades cyclic guanosine monophosphate (cGMP), an active signaling molecule that plays a role in vascular biology. Lower levels of cGMP are found in people with SCD and beta-thalassemia and are associated with reduced blood flow, increased inflammation, greater cell adhesion and reduced nitric oxide mediated vasodilation.

Blocking PDE9 acts to increase cGMP levels, which is associated with reactivation of fetal hemoglobin (HbF), a natural hemoglobin produced during fetal development. Increased levels of HbF in RBCs have been demonstrated to improve symptomology and substantially lower disease burden in both patients with SCD and patients with beta-thalassemia.

About Imara
Imara Inc. is a clinical-stage biotechnology company dedicated to developing and commercializing novel therapeutics to treat patients suffering from rare inherited genetic disorders of hemoglobin. Imara is currently advancing IMR-687, a highly selective, potent small molecule inhibitor of PDE9 that is an oral, once-a-day, potentially disease-modifying treatment for sickle cell disease and beta-thalassemia. IMR-687 is being designed to have a multimodal mechanism of action that acts on red blood cells, white blood cells, adhesion mediators and other cell types. For more information, please visit www.imaratx.com.

Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

Statements in this press release about future expectations, plans and prospects, as well as any other statements regarding matters that are not historical facts, may constitute “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements include, but are not limited to, statements relating to the Company’s plans, strategies and prospects. The words “anticipate,” “believe,” “continue,” “could,” “estimate,” “expect,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “potential,” “predict,” “project,” “should,” “target,” “will,” “would” and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. Actual results may differ materially from those indicated by such forward-looking statements as a result of various important factors, including factors discussed in the “Risk Factors” section of the Company’s most recent Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q, which is on file with the Securities and Exchange Commission and in other filings that the Company makes with the Securities and Exchange Commission in the future. Any forward-looking statements contained in this press release speak only as of the date hereof, and the Company specifically disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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