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SENEXIS TO COLLABORATE WITH THE OXFORD MRC FUNCTIONAL GENOMICS UNIT AND THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON MRC CENTRE FOR NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASES ON INCLUSION BODY MYOSITIS

Cambridge, UK, 30th June 2009 **–** Inclusion Body Myositis **(**IBM) is the commonest acquired muscle disease affecting people over 50 years old and there is no effective treatment. Senexis Limited, the Oxford MRC Functional Genomics Unit (FGU) and the UCL MRC Centre for Neuromuscular Diseases (CNMD) announced today that they have agreed to collaborate on the discovery of novel therapeutics for Inclusion Body Myositis (IBM). The collaboration will exploit the three organisations combined resources and intellectual property to accelerate the discovery of new compounds for the potential treatment of Inclusion Body Myositis. This collaboration is funded by the Pilot Industry Collaboration Award Scheme, which MRC and MRCT set up to encourage collaborative research between academic and industry participants at MRC Showcase events.

The Sattelle Laboratory at MRC FGU is at the forefront of research on nervous system and neuromuscular diseases, using an invertebrate (*C. elegans*) model organism to explore both mechanisms and new routes to therapy. Such disease models, together with research on important cell lines developed by the Greensmith and Hanna laboratories at CNMD, will be used to help speed the path from bench to bedside of new chemical leads. Mark Treherne, Senexis' Chief Executive, commented: "We are pleased to be collaborating with the MRC at Oxford and at University College, London. IBM receives comparatively little attention and there is a significant medical need for therapeutic intervention for this condition. We now look forward to being able to accelerate the discovery of molecules with future therapeutic potential". Professor Sattelle said "This MRC funding will assist in bringing the impact of basic research to patients more quickly."

IBM is characterised by the irreversible progressive disabling weakness, degeneration and chronic inflammation of muscle. However, the often considerable delay between onset and diagnosis, together with limitations in diagnostic criteria, means the disease prevalence is probably underestimated. IBM patients are only poorly responsive to anti-inflammatory drugs and there is urgent need for effective treatment. Most IBM patients are forced to rely on assisting devices and/or caregivers within a few years of diagnosis and many also suffer dysphagia.

CONTACTS
Senexis Ltd, Cambridge
Mark Treherne, Chief Executive
+44 (0)7711 190 718
MRC Functional Genomics Unit, Oxford
David B. Sattelle, Head of Neural Signalling and Professor of Molecular Neurobiology
+44(0)1865 272145
MRC Centre for Neuromuscular Diseases, University College, London
Linda Greensmith, Reader in Neuroscience
+44(0)20 7676 2161
Michael G. Hanna, Professor and Director of the MRC Centre for Neuromuscular Diseases
+44(0)20 7837 3611 ext 3014

About Senexis
Senexis is a growing drug development company, dedicated to the discovery of effective treatments and diagnostics for major ageing-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's dementia, as well as IBM. It is now widely believed that the misfolding and aggregation of amyloid-like proteins underlies the pathologies of IBM, Alzheimer's and other diseases and Senexis has discovered potent and selective compounds that protect cells and tissues from the toxic forms of amyloid. Further information on Senexis can be found at www.senexis.com

About The Oxford MRC Functional Genomics Unit
The mission of the MRC Functional Genomics Unit (FGU) is to use genomic information to determine mechanisms of disease in order to develop novel therapeutic approaches. It is now well established that beneath the description of common neurological diseases as single clinical entities (e.g. motor neuron disease, Parkinson's disease or Alzheimer's disease) there are in fact a family of disorders each of which will be rarer in the population. Developing treatments for such disorders will require an understanding of the common biochemical pathways which lead to malfunction and the development of a family of products for their treatment. In the FGU we are combining the power of computational analyses and the latest experimental technologies in model organisms to reveal the roles of genes and genomes in health and disease. The Unit is pursuing the translation of these discoveries into improved healthcare products and patient treatments via partnerships with clinicians as well as the Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology Industries. www.mrcfgu.ox.ac.uk

About The UCL MRC Centre for Neuromuscular Diseases
The MRC Centre is a joint centre between the UCL Institute of Neurology and the UCL Institute of Child Health, London and the University of Newcastle. Genetic and acquired neuromuscular diseases represent a major cause of mortality and morbidity in children and adults but currently there is a large gap between major basic science discoveries and patient benefit in these

important disorders. In order to reduce this gap the MRC Centre was formed in 2007 and represents the first truly multidisciplinary translational research centre into these disabling diseases. The Centre's mission is to translate basic science findings into clinical trials and new treatments for children and adults with disabling neuromuscular diseases. The Centre has reciprocal clinical and research links with other neuromuscular research groups and patient organisations throughout the UK and works closely with the very large adult and paediatric neuromuscular disease patient populations cared for at the co-located hospitals. www.cnmd.ac.uk