



**For Immediate Release**

## **NEXT-GENERATION DISEASE-MODIFYING DRUGS FOR ALZHEIMER'S ENTER PRE-CLINICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Cambridge, UK, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010 - Senexis Limited has identified drug candidates from different and novel chemical series that have shown potential in pre-clinical models, as disease-modifying treatments for Alzheimer's disease. Their success secures the drawdown of a further tranche of funding from the Wellcome Trust to support pre-clinical development of the most promising candidates from the SEN1500 series.

Senexis were awarded £2.9 million by the Wellcome Trust, under the Seeding Drug Discovery initiative in 2008, to support selection studies to identify potential drug candidates for pre-clinical development. Successful completion of these studies now triggers the release of funds, enabling Senexis to initiate that planned development and file two further patents to protect this next generation of potentially disease-modifying Alzheimer's drugs.

Using proprietary drug screening technologies, Senexis have identified novel compounds, which target the soluble assemblies of brain proteins that are a toxic form of amyloid. These potential drugs have been selected for their ability to prevent amyloid from aggregating or "clumping together". The effect of the compounds is to protect against amyloid toxicity, well before the formation of the tell-tale "plaques" that have been used to classify the disease, since the original discoveries of Alois Alzheimer over a century ago.

Ted Bianco, Director of Technology Transfer at the Wellcome Trust said: "Current treatments for Alzheimer's disease provide only temporary relief from the symptoms, and there is a pressing need for new medicines to treat the cause and delay disease progression. We are pleased that Senexis is delivering on milestones, so that we can continue to support their progress in this historically challenging area."

In parallel to initiating pre-clinical development, Senexis is also now seeking clinical development partners, as targeting amyloid for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease is now becoming established as a compelling therapeutic approach for a number of established pharmaceutical companies. This increase in interest is largely driven by recent advances in the understanding of the pathology that underlies the disease. Given the lack of recent industry success in clinical studies with small molecule drugs in this challenging therapeutic area, Senexis' novel approach represents a significant step forward. Such next-generation drugs are anticipated to demonstrate considerable advantages over competitor compounds currently in development.

Mark Treherne, Senexis' Chief Executive, commented: "We are delighted that the Wellcome Trust has continued to support the Company, so that we can progress our compounds into pre-clinical development. The release of this tranche of funding was only approved after rigorous review by the Trust's experienced panel of external consultants. This detailed scrutiny emphasises the value of our discovery platform and we are now ideally placed to explore a range of commercial transactions with suitable development partners. In particular, we now look forward to being able to accelerate our small molecule compounds towards the clinic by 2012."

The number of people with Alzheimer's disease is expected to at least double over the next two decades. Currently, the worldwide prevalence of Alzheimer's is thought to be approximately 30 million, with over five million people in the US alone affected by the disease.

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**About Senexis Limited**

Senexis is a drug discovery and development company, dedicated to the discovery of effective treatments and diagnostics for major ageing-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's dementia. It is now widely believed that the misfolding and aggregation of amyloid-like proteins underlies the pathologies of Alzheimer's disease and Senexis has discovered potent and selective compounds that protect cells and tissues from the toxic forms of amyloid. Senexis is now actively seeking development partners and further information on Senexis can be found at [www.senexis.com](http://www.senexis.com).

**About the Wellcome Trust**

The Wellcome Trust is a global charity dedicated to achieving extraordinary improvements in human and animal health. It supports the brightest minds in biomedical research and the medical humanities. The Trust's breadth of support includes public engagement, education and the application of research to improve health. It is independent of both political and commercial interests. [www.wellcome.ac.uk](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk)