Lecanemab Receives Priority Review Status in Japan

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TOKYO and CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Jan. 29, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Eisai Co., Ltd. (Headquarters: Tokyo, CEO: Haruo Naito, "Eisai") and Biogen Inc. (Nasdaq: BIIB, Corporate headquarters: Cambridge, Massachusetts, CEO: Christopher A. Viehbacher, "Biogen") announced today that an application for manufacturing and marketing approval for lecanemab (generic name, U.S. brand name: LEQEMBI™), an anti-amyloid-β (Aβ) protofibril* antibody, in Japan has been designated for Priority Review by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). Priority Review in Japan is granted to new medicines recognized as having high medical utility for serious diseases, and once designated for Priority Review, the target total review period is shortened.

In Japan, Eisai submitted the manufacturing and marketing approval for lecanemab to the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA) on January 16, 2023. This application is based on the results of the Phase III Clarity AD study and the Phase IIb clinical study (Study 201), which demonstrated that lecanemab treatment showed a reduction of clinical decline in early AD.

Lecanemab selectively binds and eliminates soluble, toxic Aβ aggregates (protofibrils) that are thought to contribute to the neurotoxicity in AD. As such, lecanemab may have the potential to have an effect on disease pathology and to slow down the progression of the disease. The Clarity AD study of lecanemab met its primary endpoint and all key secondary endpoints with highly statistically significant results. In November 2022, the results of the Clarity AD study were presented at the 2022 Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's Disease (CTAD) conference and simultaneously published in *the New England Journal of Medicine*, a peer-reviewed medical journal.

In the U.S., lecanemab was granted accelerated approval as a treatment for AD by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on January 6, 2023. On the same day, Eisai submitted a Supplemental Biologics License Application (sBLA) to the FDA for approval under the traditional pathway. In Europe, Eisai submitted a marketing authorization application (MAA) to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on January 9, 2023 and accepted on January 26, 2023. In China, Eisai initiated submission of data for a BLA to the National Medical Products Administration (NMPA) in December 2022.

Eisai serves as the lead of lecanemab development and regulatory submissions globally with both Eisai and Biogen co-commercializing and co-promoting the product and Eisai having final decision-making authority.

* Protofibrils are large Aβ aggregated soluble species of 75-500 Kd. [1,2]

Contacts

MEDIA CONTACT:
Eisai Co., Ltd.
Public Relations Department
TEL: +81-(0)3-3817-5120

Eisai Inc. (U.S.)
Libby Holman
+ 1-201-753-1945
Libby_Holman@eisai.com

INVESTOR CONTACT:
Eisai Co., Ltd.
Investor Relations Department
TEL: +81-(0)03-3817-5122

MEDIA CONTACT:
Biogen Inc.
Natacha Gassenbach
+ 1-857-777-6573
public.affairs@biogen.com

INVESTOR CONTACT:
Biogen Inc.
Mike Hencke
+ 1-781-464-2442
IR@biogen.com

[Notes to editors]

1. About Priority Review in Japan

Priority review is granted to medicines that meet all of the following requirements. In addition, medicines designated as orphan drugs and pioneering medicines will be given priority for review.
i. the qualifying disease is deemed to be serious; and
ii. the efficacy or safety of the product is recognized to be clearly superior to that of existing medicines, medical devices, or regenerative medical products or treatment methods from a medical point of view.

2. About Lecanemab

Lecanemab (Brand Name in the U.S.: LEQEMBI™) is the result of a strategic research alliance between Eisai and BioArctic. Lecanemab is a humanized immunoglobulin gamma 1 (IgG1) monoclonal antibody directed against aggregated soluble (protofibril) and insoluble forms of amyloid-beta (Aβ). Lecanemab selectively binds and eliminates Aβ protofibrils that are thought to contribute to the neurotoxicity in AD. As such, lecanemab may have the potential to have an effect on disease pathology and to slow down the progression of the disease. In the U.S., LEQEMBI was granted accelerated approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on January 6, 2023. LEQEMBI is indicated for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease (AD) in the U.S. Treatment with LEQEMBI should be initiated in patients with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia stage of disease, the population in which treatment was initiated in clinical trials. There are no safety or effectiveness data on initiating treatment at earlier or later stages of the disease than were studied. This indication is approved under accelerated approval based on reduction in Aβ plaques observed in patients treated with LEQEMBI. Continued approval for this indication may be contingent upon verification of clinical benefit in a confirmatory trial. The Clarity AD study of lecanemab met its primary endpoint and all key secondary endpoints with highly statistically significant results.

Please see full Prescribing Information in the United States.

Eisai submitted an application for manufacturing and marketing approval to the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA) on January 16, 2023 in Japan. Eisai utilized the prior assessment consultation system of PMDA, with the aim of shortening the review period for lecanemab. In the U.S., Eisai submitted a Supplemental Biologics License Application (sBLA) to the FDA for approval under the traditional pathway on January 6, 2023. In Europe, Eisai submitted a marketing authorization application (MAA) to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on January 9, 2023 and accepted on January 26, 2023. In China, Eisai initiated submission of data for a BLA to the National Medical Products Administration (NMPA) of China in December 2022.

Eisai has completed a lecanemab subcutaneous bioavailability study, and subcutaneous dosing is currently being evaluated in the Clarity AD OLE.

Since July 2020 the Phase 3 clinical study (AHEAD 3-45) for individuals with preclinical AD, meaning they are clinically normal and have intermediate or elevated levels of amyloid in their brains, has been ongoing. AHEAD 3-45 is conducted as a public-private partnership between the Alzheimer's Clinical Trial Consortium that provides the infrastructure for academic clinical trials in AD and related dementias in the U.S., funded by the National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health, Eisai and Biogen.

Since January 2022, the Tau NexGen clinical study for Dominantly Inherited AD (DIAD), that is conducted by the Dominantly Inherited Alzheimer Network Trials Unit (DIAN-TU), led by Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, has been ongoing.

3. About the Collaboration between Eisai and Biogen for AD

Eisai and Biogen have been collaborating on the joint development and commercialization of AD treatments since 2014. Eisai serves as the lead of lecanemab development and regulatory submissions globally with both companies co-commercializing and co-promoting the product and Eisai having final decision-making authority.

4. About the Collaboration between Eisai and BioArctic for AD

Since 2005, Eisai and BioArctic have had a long-term collaboration regarding the development and commercialization of AD treatments. Eisai obtained the global rights to study, develop, manufacture and market lecanemab for the treatment of AD pursuant to an agreement with BioArctic in December 2007. The development and commercialization agreement on the antibody lecanemab back-up was signed in May 2015.

5. About Eisai Co., Ltd.

Eisai's Corporate Concept is "to give first thought to patients and people in the daily living domain, and to increase the benefits that health care provides." Under this Concept (also known as *human health care* (*hhc*) Concept), we aim to effectively achieve social good in the form of relieving anxiety over health and reducing health disparities. With a global network of R&D facilities, manufacturing sites and marketing subsidiaries, we strive to create and deliver innovative products to target diseases with high unmet medical needs, with a particular focus in our strategic areas of Neurology and Oncology.

In addition, we demonstrate our commitment to the elimination of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), which is a target (3.3) of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with working on various activities together with global partners.

For more information about Eisai, please visit www.eisai.com (for global headquarters: Eisai Co., Ltd.), and connect with us on Twitter @Eisai_SDGs.

6. About Biogen

As pioneers in neuroscience, Biogen discovers, develops, and delivers worldwide innovative therapies for people living with serious neurological diseases as well as related therapeutic adjacencies. One of the world's first global biotechnology companies, Biogen was founded in 1978 by Charles Weissmann, Heinz Schaller, Sir Kenneth Murray, and Nobel Prize winners Walter Gilbert and Phillip Sharp. Today, Biogen has a leading portfolio of medicines to treat multiple sclerosis, has introduced the first approved treatment for spinal muscular atrophy, and developed the first approved treatment to address a defining pathology of Alzheimer's disease. Biogen is also commercializing biosimilars and focusing on advancing one of the industry's most diversified pipelines in neuroscience that will transform the standard of care for patients in several areas of high unmet need.

We routinely post information that may be important to investors on our website at www.biogen.com. Follow us on social media - Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube.

Biogen Safe Harbor

This news release contains forward-looking statements, including statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, about the potential clinical effects of lecanemab; the potential benefits, safety and efficacy of lecanemab; potential regulatory discussions, submissions and approvals and the timing thereof; the treatment of Alzheimer's disease; the anticipated benefits and potential of Biogen's collaboration arrangements with Eisai; the potential of Biogen's commercial business and pipeline programs, including lecanemab; and risks and uncertainties associated with drug development and commercialization. These statements may be identified by words such as "aim," "anticipate," "believe," "could," "estimate," "expect," "forecast," "intend," "may," "plan," "possible," "potential," "will," "would" and other words and terms of similar meaning. Drug development and commercialization involve a high degree of risk, and only a small number of research and development programs result in commercialization of a product. Results in early-stage clinical studies may not be indicative of full results or results from later stage or larger scale clinical studies and do not ensure regulatory approval. You should not place undue reliance on these statements or the scientific data presented.

These statements involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those reflected in such statements, including without limitation unexpected concerns that may arise from additional data, analysis or results obtained during clinical studies, including the Clarity AD clinical trial and AHEAD 3-45 study; the occurrence of adverse safety events; risks of unexpected costs or delays; the risk of other unexpected hurdles; regulatory submissions may take longer or be more difficult to complete than expected; regulatory authorities may require additional information or further studies, or may fail or refuse to approve or may delay approval of Biogen's drug candidates, including lecanemab; actual timing and content of submissions to and decisions made by the regulatory authorities regarding lecanemab; uncertainty of success in the development and potential commercialization of lecanemab; failure to protect and enforce Biogen's data, intellectual property and other proprietary rights and uncertainties relating to intellectual property claims and challenges; product liability claims; third party collaboration risks; and the direct and indirect impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on Biogen's business, results of operations and financial condition. The foregoing sets forth many, but not all, of the factors that could cause actual results to differ from Biogen's expectations in any forward-looking statement. Investors should consider this cautionary statement as well as the risk factors identified in Biogen's most recent annual or quarterly report and in other reports Biogen has filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. These statements are based on Biogen's current beliefs and expectations and speak only as of the date of this news release. Biogen does not undertake any obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

References

1. “Lecanemab Sweeps up Toxic AB Protofibrils, Catches Eyes of Trialists.” ALZFORUM, ALZFORUM, 21 Nov. 2021, https://www.alzforum.org/news/conference-coverage/lecanemab-sweeps-toxic-av-protofibrils-catches-eyes-trialists.
2. Sehlin D, Englund H, Simu B, Karlsson M, Ingelsson M, Nikolajeff F, Lannfelt L, Pettersson FE. Large aggregates are the major soluble Aβ species in AD brain fractionated with density gradient ultracentrifugation. *PLoS One*. 2012;7(2): e32014. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0032014. Epub 2012 Feb 15. PMID: 22355408; PMCID: PMC3280222.