Evotec and Harvard Stem Cell Institute form CureMN collaboration to advance ALS research

Hamburg, Germany – 12 September 2013: Evotec AG (Frankfurt Stock Exchange: EVT, TecDAX, ISIN: DE0005664809) today announced a strategic partnership with the Harvard Stem Cell Institute (“HSCI”) to identify compounds that prevent or slow down the loss of motor neurons, which is characteristic of the human disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (“ALS”). The collaboration “CureMN” (CureMotorNeuron) will leverage human motor neuron assays based on ALS patient-derived induced pluripotent stem (“iPS”) cells that were developed by Dr Lee Rubin, HSCI Principal Faculty member and professor in the Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology at Harvard, and Dr Kevin Eggan, Early Career Scientist at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, HSCI Principal Faculty member and professor in the Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology at Harvard as well as Evotec’s leading drug discovery infrastructure and expertise to identify compounds that will have therapeutic value against this life-threatening disease.

Dr Cord Dohrmann, Chief Scientific Officer of Evotec, commented: “Kevin and Lee have made significant contributions to our understanding of the underlying pathology of motor neuron diseases. Their laboratories have developed a large array of ALS patient-derived motor neuron models that allow screening of diseased human cells in culture – an approach that is sometimes referred to as a ‘clinical trial in a dish’. Our intention is to systematically screen for new mechanisms, targets and compounds that have the potential to be developed into new products that will modify and ideally halt the progression of ALS and potentially other motor neuron diseases.”

“Phenotypic screens based on patient-derived iPSC cells are an exciting approach to tackle diseases where tractable mechanisms have remained elusive. Evotec’s proven expertise in high-content screening and deep knowledge in the field of motor neurons is a perfect match for this project. In this latest collaborative effort with Evotec, we look forward to putting our combined dedication and knowledge to work identifying new therapeutics for motor neuron diseases”, added Dr Vivian Berlin, Director Business Development in Harvard’s Office of Technology Development.

This agreement marks the third collaboration between Evotec and leading Harvard Stem Cell Institute scientists – and the fourth with Harvard scientists – and significantly expands a partnership model which combines cutting-edge academic research from Harvard with Evotec’s leading drug platform and expertise. This partnership model efficiently and effectively drives the development of innovative drug candidates.
“This agreement is another important step in our vital collaboration with Evotec, enabling us to hasten the transfer of stem cell-based discoveries to the clinic”, said Brock Reeve, Executive Director of HSCI.

“Evotec, HSCI and Harvard share a commitment to accelerating promising research from the lab to the clinic”, says Isaac T. Kohlberg, Harvard University’s Senior Associate Provost and Chief Technology Development Officer. “Our continued collaboration is based upon a shared vision to match world-class science with industrial capability to address important unmet medical need, which is at the core of our public mission.”

Evotec has also reached an agreement in principal with PatientsLikeMe (www.patientslikeme.com) on approaches to rapidly evaluate any patient testable theories about progression or pathways that might express themselves in ALS patients.

No financials were disclosed.

ABOUT ALS
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (“ALS”) – also referred to as motor neurone disease or Lou Gehrig’s disease in some part of the United States – is a debilitating disease with varied etiology characterised by rapidly progressive weakness, muscle atrophy and fasciculations, muscle spasticity, difficulty speaking (dysarthria), difficulty swallowing (dysphagia) and difficulty breathing (dyspnea). ALS is the most common of the five motor neuron diseases. The disorder induces muscle weakness and atrophy throughout the body caused by the degeneration of the upper and lower motor neurons. Unable to function, the muscles weaken and atrophy. Individuals affected by the disorder may ultimately lose the ability to initiate and control all voluntary movement, although bladder and bowel sphincters and the muscles responsible for eye movement are usually, but not always, spared until the terminal stages of the disease. The majority of people with ALS die within 3-5 years from the onset of the symptoms; only about 10% of the people with ALS survive for 10 years or more. ALS mainly affects people between the ages of 40 and 70, with an average age of 55 at the time of diagnosis. Generally, ALS is 20% more common in men than women. The incidence of ALS is 2 per 100,000 people and there are about 150,000 patients diagnosed with ALS worldwide.

ABOUT EVOTEC AG
Evotec is a drug discovery alliance and development partnership company focused on rapidly progressing innovative product approaches with leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. We operate worldwide providing the highest quality stand-alone and integrated drug discovery solutions, covering all activities from target-to-clinic. The Company has established a unique position by assembling top-class scientific experts and integrating state-of-the-art technologies as well as substantial experience and expertise in key therapeutic areas including neuroscience, pain, metabolic diseases as well as oncology and inflammation. Evotec has long-term discovery alliances with partners including Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, CHDI, Genentech, Janssen Pharmaceutica, MedImmune/AstraZeneca and Ono Pharmaceutical. In addition, the Company has existing development partnerships and product candidates both in clinical and pre-clinical development. These include partnerships with Boehringer Ingelheim, MedImmune and Andromeda (Teva) in the field of diabetes, with Janssen Pharmaceuticals in the field of depression and with Roche in the field of Alzheimer’s disease. For additional information please go to www.evotec.com.

ABOUT HARVARD UNIVERSITY’S OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT
Harvard’s Office of Technology Development (“OTD”) is responsible for all activities pertaining to the evaluation, patenting and licensing of new inventions and discoveries made at Harvard University and Harvard Medical School. OTD also serves to further the development of Harvard technologies through the establishment of sponsored research collaborations with industry. OTD’s mission is to promote the public good by fostering innovation and translating new inventions made at Harvard into useful products available and beneficial to society.
ABOUT THE HARVARD STEM CELL INSTITUTE
The Harvard Stem Cell Institute is a unique collaborative organization of more than 1000 Harvard University and its affiliated hospitals and institutes, including about 100 Principal Faculty members, dedicated to advancing stem cell biology in order to advance our understanding of human development and discover cures and treatments for disease. HSCI is home to one of the largest concentrations of stem cell scientists anywhere in the world, and includes among its members many of the leaders in the field.

ABOUT PATIENTSLIKEME
PatientsLikeMe® (www.patientslikeme.com) is a patient network that improves lives and a real-time research platform that advances medicine. Through the network, patients connect with others who have the same disease or condition and track and share their own experiences. In the process, they generate data about the real-world nature of disease that help researchers, pharmaceutical companies, regulators, providers, and nonprofits develop more effective products, services and care. PatientsLikeMe is a trusted source for real-world disease information and a clinically robust resource that has published more than 35 peer-reviewed research studies. Visit us at www.patientslikeme.com or follow us via our blog, Twitter or Facebook.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS — Information set forth in this press release contains forward-looking statements, which involve a number of risks and uncertainties. The forward-looking statements contained herein represent the judgement of Evotec as of the date of this report. Such forward-looking statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but are subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond our control, and which could cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated in these forward-looking statements. We expressly disclaim any obligation or undertaking to release publicly any updates or revisions to any such statements to reflect any change in our expectations or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statement is based.