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GSK in-licenses antibody for severe asthma from Janssen

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GSK has announced that it has entered into an exclusive, worldwide licence agreement with Janssen Sciences Ireland UC (Janssen) for CNTO 7160, an anti-IL-33R monoclonal antibody currently in phase I clinical development. The agreement covers all therapeutic fields.

CNTO 7160 is a biological therapy that prevents interleukin-33 from binding to the ST2 receptor (IL-33R) and could be applicable to a broad spectrum of severe asthmatic populations. There is strong human genetic evidence and target biology linking the IL-33 pathway to asthma and regulation of inflammatory cells known to be important in asthma, including neutrophils and eosinophils.

Under the terms of the agreement, GSK will assume all development, manufacturing and commercialisation activities worldwide with the exception of the ongoing phase I study, which Janssen will continue to run through to completion.

Janssen will receive up to £175 million comprising an upfront payment, and development and first commercial sales milestones, in addition to tiered royalties on sales and further considerations contingent on future sales performance.

Dave Allen, Head of Respiratory R&D at GSK, said: "While current options for the treatment of mild to moderate asthma enable patients to achieve good control of their symptoms, there remains significant unmet need in severe patients. The IL-33 receptor antibody joins our diverse respiratory R&D portfolio of targeted biological therapies and offers the potential to block a fundamental driver of the disease.

"Following our recent successful launch of a first-in-class biologic for severe asthma in an eosinophilic population, we plan to investigate this asset's potential to treat other targeted populations, for which there are currently no effective medicines."