

Press  
Release

# Vifor Pharma and Evotec form joint venture for early development in nephrology

- Vifor Pharma and Evotec to create a jointly-owned drug discovery and development platform for innovative nephrology therapeutics
- Collaboration brings together Evotec's best-in-class drug discovery capabilities and Vifor Pharma's development and commercialization expertise in nephrology
- Joint venture will focus on patient data driven target identification to pursue a precision medicine approach for the treatment of kidney diseases

**St. Gallen, Hamburg, 6 November 2019** – Vifor Pharma and Evotec SE today announced the launch of a 50:50 joint venture focused on the discovery and development of novel nephrology therapeutics. Vifor Pharma will be benefiting from access to an external R&D capability for the development of its own nephrology pipeline, while Evotec will gain access to a commercial partner through outlicensing all nephrology assets developed through the joint venture to the Vifor Pharma Group.

Under the terms of the agreement, the joint venture will focus on the discovery of nephrology therapeutics by analyzing the clinical data provided by Evotec that is mining a unique UK kidney biobank, NURTuRE in order to identify new targets for renal therapies, and sharpen existing product profiles of an innovative pipeline. Evotec will focus on applying its leading drug discovery & development capabilities and will leverage Vifor Pharma's proven commercial platform to create a robust pipeline of nephrology programmes. Upon completion of clinical trials for drugs in the newly-created, jointly-owned pipeline, products will be outlicensed to Vifor Pharma for registration and commercialization to further expand Vifor Pharma Group's strong nephrology pipeline.

Initial funding of € 25 m for pre-clinical development will be covered by Vifor Pharma, so that multiple targets or candidates can be moved forward simultaneously. The use of Evotec's proprietary PanHunter bioinformatics platform, combined with high-quality data sets from thousands of human kidney disease patients will lead to the discovery of a number of promising therapeutic options in the kidney disease space. The clinical and commercial costs for any successful compounds are anticipated to be shared equally by both companies, with opt-out rights at each stage based on a predetermined profit share arrangement.

Stefan Schulze, COO and President of the Executive Committee at Vifor Pharma commented: "The creation of the joint venture will enable us to identify new targets for renal therapies to bolster our pipeline. We will now have access to Evotec's best-in-class drug discovery as well as pre-clinical capabilities without having to expand our own R&D infrastructure. By drawing on the unique strengths of Vifor Pharma and Evotec, this joint venture will create a powerful research platform and contribute to establish Vifor Pharma as a global leader in nephrology."

Cord Dohrmann, CSO at Evotec commented: "We are excited to be entering into this highly complementary joint venture with Vifor Pharma. The partnership will help us maximize the potential of our early-stage target identification and candidate selection platform in nephrology by creating a joint company with one of the world leaders in nephrology clinical development and commercialization. This will allow Evotec to participate in the value generation of clinical development."

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**Vifor Pharma Group** is a global pharmaceuticals company headquartered in Switzerland. It aims to become the global leader in iron deficiency, nephrology and cardio-renal therapies. The company is the partner of choice for pharmaceuticals and innovative patient-focused solutions. The Vifor Pharma Group strives to help patients around the world with severe and chronic diseases lead better, healthier lives. The company develops, manufactures and markets pharmaceutical products for precision patient care. The Vifor Pharma Group holds a leading position in all its core business activities and consists of the following companies: Vifor Pharma; Vifor Fresenius Medical Care Renal Pharma (a joint company with Fresenius Medical Care); Relypsa; and OM Pharma. The Vifor Pharma Group is listed on the Swiss Stock Exchange (SIX Swiss Exchange, VIFN, ISIN: CH0364749348). For more information, please visit [viforpharma.com](http://viforpharma.com).

**Evotec SE** is a drug discovery alliance and development partnership company focused on rapidly progressing innovative product approaches with leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, academics, patient advocacy groups and venture capitalists. We operate worldwide and our more than 2,800 employees provide the highest quality stand-alone and integrated drug discovery and development solutions. We cover all activities from target-to-clinic to meet the industry's need for innovation and efficiency in drug discovery and development (EVT Execute). 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 neuronal diseases, diabetes and complications of diabetes, pain and inflammation, oncology, infectious diseases, respiratory diseases and fibrosis. On this basis, Evotec has built a broad and deep pipeline of approx. 100 co-owned product opportunities at clinical, pre-clinical and discovery stages (EVT Innovate). Evotec has established multiple long-term alliances with partners including Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, Celgene, CHDI, Novartis, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer, Sanofi, Takeda, UCB and others. For additional information please go to <http://www.evotec.com> and follow us on Twitter [@Evotec](https://twitter.com/Evotec).