

June 22, 2020  
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

## Sawai and Neugen Pharma enter into Co-development and Definitive License Agreement for ALS Drug

Osaka, Japan – June 11, 2020 – Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (Sawai, Head office: Osaka, Japan, President: Mitsuo Sawai) announced that it has entered into a co-development and exclusive license agreement with NEUGEN Pharma, Inc. (Neugen Pharma, Head office: Tokyo, Japan, President: Joh-E Ikeda) for the manufacturing and marketing rights of WN1316, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) drug candidate.

Based on this agreement, Sawai will proceed with the joint development of WN1316<sup>1)</sup>, which was discovered by Neugen Pharma, targeting global markets including North America, Europe, Asia, and Japan, for all indications applicable as an ethical drug.

Cell death induced by oxidative stress and neuroinflammatory response with the molecular background of oxidative stress are considered to be involved in the onset and progression of ALS. Neuronal Apoptosis Inhibitor Protein (NAIP) is correlated with the progression of ALS symptoms, and could be a potential predictive biomarker for the diagnosis and progression of ALS<sup>2)</sup>. WN1316 is expected to slow the progression of ALS symptoms by inhibiting oxidative stress-induced neuronal death via inducing NAIP expression<sup>1)</sup>.

1) PLOS ONE January 2014|volume 9|Issue 1/e87728

2) Scientific Reports volume 8, Article number: 6 (2018)

Under the corporate philosophy of “Always Putting Patients First”, Sawai aims to become an “indispensable resource” for society, even more than ever, by addressing unmet medical needs and improving quality of life.

### [Explanation of terms]

#### \*Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)

ALS is a neurological disease of mostly unknown cause. It affects the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral motor nerves, resulting in the rapid impairment of the muscles of the limbs and those involved in speech, swallowing, and breathing. Currently, there are more than 9,000 patients with ALS in Japan, and the average age of onset is 55–57 years. Most ALS cases are sporadic (cause of onset is unknown) and around 10% are familial (genes have been identified).

#### \*NAIP

Acronym of Neuronal Apoptosis Inhibitor Protein. NAIP is a functional protein induced by oxidative stress, including active oxygen species. It protects cells from various oxidative stress-induced disorders and plays a role in the maintenance and survival of nerve function. In addition, it is involved in modulating the inflammatory response of cells and tissues.

### About Neugen Pharma

Neugen Pharma, Inc. is an academic drug discovery-based venture company (Tokai University School of Medicine), established on February 8, 2005 with the aim of developing a new ALS drug. To achieve the corporate philosophy, “We develop drugs, combat ALS and neurodegenerative disease”, research and development of an innovative ALS drug is conducted through business partnerships with pharmaceutical companies. Contact information for Neugen Pharma: [office@neugenpharma.com](mailto:office@neugenpharma.com)

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