



## Oncternal Therapeutics Announces Appointment of Salim Yazji as Chief Medical Officer

May 17, 2021

SAN DIEGO, May 17, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Oncternal Therapeutics, Inc. (Nasdaq: ONCT), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of novel oncology therapies, today announced the appointment of industry veteran Salim Yazji, M.D., as Chief Medical Officer.

"Salim brings a wealth of relevant experience to Oncternal during this exciting time as we begin to advance our pipeline toward the registrational phase," said James Breitmeyer, M.D., Ph.D., Oncternal's President and CEO. "We believe that his extensive background in oncology drug development and strategy, experience with global regulatory authorities, and proven leadership ability make him an ideal fit for Oncternal as we advance our lead clinical product candidate, cirmtuzumab, along with our ROR1 targeted CAR-T program and clinical TK216 product candidate and make key strategic decisions about next steps."

Dr. Yazji stated, "I am excited to be joining Oncternal as the Company's novel pipeline matures and the organization pivots towards key decisions in its clinical programs in both hematological and solid tumors. I look forward to working with the focused team at Oncternal to advance regulatory strategy and execute upon the Company's current and future clinical development programs."

Dr. Yazji has held positions of increasing responsibility in both large and entrepreneurial organizations. He founded Elpida Therapeutics in January 2019 and co-founded Ajuta Therapeutics in October 2019, where he served as Chief Executive Officer until February 2021. He has also served on the Board of Directors of Versatope Therapeutics since April 2019. From March 2018 to January 2019, he served as Chief Medical Officer of PMV Pharma, and from November 2016 to February 2018, he served as Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer of Calimmune, which was acquired by CSL Behring in August 2017. Prior to that, he served as Vice President & Global Head of Oncology at Baxter International from 2013 to 2015 and its spinoff Baxalta from 2015 until it was acquired by Shire Plc in July 2016. From 2009 to 2013, he held global positions of increasing responsibility within Novartis where he led multiple oncology registrational clinical trials, most recently as Senior Global Clinical Leader. Prior to 2009, he held positions with Exelixis, PDL BioPharma, and Johnson & Johnson.

Dr. Yazji obtained his MD from the Pavlov School of Medicine, University of St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg, Russia, and completed his post-graduate training at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Park Plaza Hospital, Houston and the Almozov Hospital, St. Petersburg, Russia.

### Equity Inducement Grant

On May 17, 2021, Oncternal granted Dr. Yazji options to purchase a total of 425,000 shares of Oncternal common stock, including options to purchase 70,600 shares of Oncternal common stock granted as an inducement award under Oncternal's 2021 Employment Inducement Incentive Award Plan, which provides for the granting of equity awards to new employees of Oncternal as an inducement to join the Company. The options have a 10-year term and an exercise price equal to the closing price of Oncternal's common stock on May 17, 2021. The options vest over a four-year period, with 25% of the options vesting on the first anniversary of Dr. Yazji's employment start date, and the rest vesting in equal monthly installments over three years thereafter. The inducement award was approved by Oncternal's compensation committee, comprised entirely of independent directors, as required by Nasdaq Rule 5635(c)(4), and was granted as an inducement material to Dr. Yazji entering into employment with Oncternal in accordance with Nasdaq Rule 5635(c)(4).

### About Oncternal Therapeutics

Oncternal Therapeutics is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of novel oncology therapies for the treatment of cancers with critical unmet medical need. Oncternal focuses drug development on promising yet untapped biological pathways implicated in cancer generation or progression. The clinical pipeline includes [cirmtuzumab](#), an investigational monoclonal antibody designed to inhibit the ROR1 pathway, a type I tyrosine kinase-like orphan receptor, that is being evaluated in a Phase 1/2 clinical trial in combination with ibrutinib for the treatment of patients with mantle cell lymphoma (MCL) and chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and in an investigator-sponsored, Phase 1b clinical trial in combination with paclitaxel for the treatment of women with HER2-negative metastatic or locally advanced, unresectable breast cancer, as well as a Phase 2 clinical trial of cirmtuzumab in combination with venetoclax, a Bcl-2 inhibitor, in patients with relapsed/refractory CLL. We are also developing a chimeric antigen receptor T cell ([CAR-T](#)) therapy that targets ROR1, which is currently in preclinical development as a potential treatment for hematologic cancers and solid tumors. The clinical pipeline also includes [TK216](#), an investigational targeted small-molecule inhibitor of the ETS family of oncoproteins, that is being evaluated in a Phase 1/2 clinical trial for patients with Ewing sarcoma alone and in combination with vincristine chemotherapy. More information is available at <https://oncternal.com/>.

### Forward-Looking Information

Oncternal cautions you that statements included in this press release that are not a description of historical facts are forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as "may," "will," "should," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "could," "intend," "target," "project," "contemplates," "believes," "estimates," "predicts," "potential" or "continue" or the negatives of these terms or other similar expressions. These statements are based on Oncternal's current beliefs and expectations. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding Oncternal's development programs, including Oncternal's clinical plans. Forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties inherent in Oncternal's business, including risks associated with the clinical development and process for obtaining regulatory approval of Oncternal's product candidates, such as potential delays in the commencement, enrollment and completion of clinical trials; the risk that results seen in a case study of one patient likely will not predict the results seen in other patients in the clinical trial; the risk that interim results of a clinical trial do not predict final results and that one or more of the clinical outcomes may materially change as patient enrollment continues, following more comprehensive reviews of the data, as follow-up on the outcome of any particular patient continues, and as more patient data become available; and other risks described in

Oncternal's filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. All forward-looking statements in this press release are current only as of the date hereof and, except as required by applicable law, Oncternal undertakes no obligation to revise or update any forward-looking statement, or to make any other forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. All forward-looking statements are qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement. This caution is made under the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

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