

## **Nobilon and NVI co-developing RSV vaccine**

**Arnhem, the Netherlands, July 6, 2006 — Akzo Nobel's Nobilon International business, active in the field of human vaccines, has signed a contract with the Netherlands Vaccine Institute (NVI) to jointly develop a vaccine against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a viral infection which can prove fatal to young children and the elderly and for which no preventive treatment by vaccine is currently available.**

According to the World Health Organization, around 160,000 people die worldwide from RSV every year. In the Netherlands alone there are 600 deaths annually.

"Respiratory syncytial virus is the main cause of respiratory infections and can cause serious illness in young children," explained Ben van der Zeijst, Chief Scientific Officer NVI. "Almost every child has the infection at a very early age and, in the most extreme cases, it can prove fatal, with a small number of children dying each year. In the Netherlands alone, around 3,700 babies are hospitalized and need artificial ventilation every year."

He added that many critically ill children do recover, although they can suffer wheezing, lasting side-effects or a respiratory tract allergy for years. The elderly can also become infected, with as many as 30 percent of older people who have influenza turning out to actually be suffering from RSV.

RSV was discovered around 40 years ago and since then, various attempts to develop a suitable vaccine have failed. However, the NVI—part of the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport—made a breakthrough in 2003 using recombinant technology which has paved the way for the new research. The aim is to develop an intranasal spray because not only is this the natural infection route of RSV—therefore contributing to good immune defense—but it is also more convenient in its application compared with an injection.

"This collaboration is an excellent opportunity for Nobilon to use its expertise by joining forces with NVI to set up this unique Dutch biotechnology initiative," said Toon Wilderbeek, member of Akzo Nobel's Board of Management responsible for Pharma. "All pre-clinical development is planned for the next two years. Dependent on the results, further clinical development leading to registration will then be initiated."

The two organizations will be supported by Organon, Akzo Nobel's human healthcare business, who will provide clinical development and registration assistance.

Thijs Veerman, Managing Director of NVI, an agency which guarantees the supply of vaccines against infectious diseases for the Dutch population, added: "We are extremely pleased that this vaccine—which is a possible candidate for inclusion in our national vaccination program—will be developed through a public-private partnership. The fact that we are developing this with a Dutch partner demonstrates the innovative strength of the Netherlands."

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**Note for the editor**

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Internet: [www.akzonobel.com](http://www.akzonobel.com)

The NVI, an agency responsible to the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sports, guarantees the supply of vaccines against infectious diseases for the Dutch population. The vaccines are used in the regular national vaccination programs and for emergency vaccination campaigns.

Internet: [www.nvi-vaccin.nl](http://www.nvi-vaccin.nl)

**Not for publication – for more information**

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\* Pursuant to the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act 1995.