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photonamic GmbH & Co. KG

FerroSens GmbH

photonamic GmbH & Co. KG (Germany) Acquires Majority Stake in FerroSens GmbH.

photonamic GmbH & Co. KG (Head office: Pinneberg, Germany; CEO: Ulrich Kosciessa, Ph.D.) (“photonamic”), a subsidiary of SBI Holdings, Inc. (Head office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director, President and CEO: Yoshitaka Kitao) is engaged in the business of pharmaceutical development of 5-aminolevulinic acid (“5-ALA”) (*) hereby announces it has entered into definitive agreement to acquire a majority stake in FerroSens GmbH (Head office: Munich, Germany; CEO and Founder: Christian Homann Ph.D.) (“FerroSens”).

FerroSens has successfully developed *FIDscreen*, a simple and non-invasive iron deficiency testing device. *FIDscreen* is based on an optical method, fluorescence spectroscopy and an elaborate data evaluation to obtain a quantitative measurement of zinc protoporphyrin (ZnPP), an established marker for iron deficiency. The measurement is performed on the lower lip of an individual and takes about one minute, whereas conventional test method requires blood taking by healthcare professionals.

Iron deficiency is the world's most common nutritional deficiency. 500 million children around the world suffer from iron deficiency. Iron deficiency in childhood impairs the cognitive development and leads to a lower IQ, and also weakens the immune system. Iron deficiency can be easily treated, however most persons affected are unaware of their need for iron. This is because no suitable screening test is available, as all existing methods require a blood withdrawal and laboratory processing.

“We are pleased to welcome FerroSens as part of SBI ALApharma Group. *FIDscreen* is favorably positioned as a solution to the globally unsolved problem of iron deficiency. Moreover, there is a great potential in its technology platform which will add great value to our group’s business around fluorescence imaging technology using 5-ALA”, explained Ulrich Kosciessa, photonamic GmbH & Co. KG’s CEO. “Combining the capabilities of 5-ALA as a precursor of protoporphyrin in combination with this technology will allow us to provide innovative solutions for the benefit of patients and health care professionals specifically in the field of oncology.”

“We are delighted to be part of the SBI ALApharma Group to leverage our technology platform to be accepted globally enabling screening for iron deficiency through its simple and fast non-invasive method without the need for blood withdrawal. We will strive to become a leader in optical, non-invasive health diagnostics” says Christian Homann, FerroSens’ CEO and Founder.



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The SBI Group will continue to focus on research and development to provide pharmaceuticals and medical devices that satisfy unmet medical needs for patients globally.

(*) 5-aminolevulinic acid (“5-ALA”)

An endogenous amino acid derivative produced in mitochondria. Apart from its natural role as an important natural substance metabolized to heme and cytochromes serving the forenergy production in the mitochondria membranes it is metabolized to Protoporphrin IX (PP IX) in cancer cells. PP IX, a photosensitizer, can be activated by blue light causing pink fluorescence, clearly visualizing the respective cancer cells.

About photonamic GmbH & Co. KG

photonamic is a German based company involved in the development of 5-ALA in various applications as precursor for the photosensitizer PP IX. As a member of the SBI group with its parent company SBI ALApharma. photonamic has developed 5-ALA for the fluorescence guided resection of Glioblastoma which is marketed as Gliolan™ or Alabel™ through various partners in e.g. Europe, Japan, Australia and Korea and Gleolan™ in the United States through its own subsidiary NXDC Inc. Within the group photonamic and its affiliated companies in the US, Canada and Japan are aggressively extending the development activities with 5-ALA even outside the field of photodynamic application, e.g. immune modulation in infectious diseases, food supplement, cosmetics.

About FerroSens GmbH

FerroSens GmbH (www.ferrosens.de) is a spin-off of the Laser Research Laboratory, an institute of the LIFE Center, at the University Hospital Munich. The company was founded in July 2017 with the main office in Munich (Germany), driven by the WHO’s proclaimed research priority to develop a very cost-effective, portable, reliable instrument to measure the iron parameter Zinc Protoporphyrin. After several years of extensive research and development, clinical studies on close to 1,000 participants showed the high reliability and accuracy of the newly developed non-invasive measurement technique. FerroSens was supported in its fundraising activities by Silversky LifeSciences GmbH and Richter Asset Management GmbH.

For further information, please contact:

photonamic GmbH & Co. KG info@photonamic.de