Gothenburg, January 4, 2016.

PExA and AstraZeneca extends co-operation agreement

PExA AB and AstraZeneca have extended their co-operation agreement. The joint project aims to investigate how PExA's technology for collecting particles can be used in AstraZeneca's research and development in respiratory diseases. Previous agreement has been running for one year at a time. Now, co-operation deepens and the parties have signed a two year contract. The agreement with AstraZeneca is of great strategic importance for PExA but will not significantly affect the company's operating profit.

The cooperation, which has been running since 2013, aims to identify opportunities for AstraZeneca to utilize PExA's collection techniques in their own research and development activities. PExA has a unique patent protected method for capturing small liquid droplets, particles, which contain potential biomarkers for different stages in diseases affecting the airways. Something like this has never been available on the market before.

Through the cooperation AstraZeneca is buying a temporary evaluation license and collection samples from PExA. The actual sampling is carried out in collaboration between PExA and the Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, AMM, headed by Professor Anna-Carin Olin at the University of Gothenburg and Sahlgrenska University Hospital.

For PExA, which is about to introduce its method/instrument PExA 2.0, that provide lung researchers with a powerful tool to study a variety of pulmonary diseases, it is particularly important that AstraZeneca has chosen to once again extend the cooperation, this time by a two-year contract. If the cooperation project is successful, PExA's method will be validated in some strategically important areas. The expectation is that the pharmaceutical companies in the area can streamline their processes for developing, for example, drugs for COPD and asthma.

Lung diseases often begins in the small airways where it previous has been difficult to follow disease progression and treatment effects. PExA intends shortly to introduce its technology as a method and an instrument to be used in academic, industrial and clinical research on lung diseases. Using PExA's simple method, research groups can collect particles from the peripheral airways efficient, reproducible and non-invasive.

- *That AstraZeneca has chosen to continue the cooperation gives us valuable impetus for the upcoming market introduction, comments PExA's CEO, Erik Ekbo. The joint research project involves a thorough validation of the method and its potential. We will initially introduce the method especially for lung research groups in academic centers in different countries but at the same time, we want to continue to work with AstraZeneca in their drug development, concludes the company's CEO.*

PExA's unique collection techniques have been developed since 2004 by researchers at the University of Gothenburg and the method is well documented in over 15 scientific articles and three doctoral theses.

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PExA AB (556956-9246) develops and markets a research instrument with associated products and services to lung researchers for easy and non-invasive sampling, in order to study respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, COPD. The sample can be used to detect lung diseases in an early stage. The sample can be compared to a "blood test for the small airways". The purpose is to facilitate the development of reliable and more individualized diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of respiratory diseases. The original idea and research behind the method comes from the Department for Occupational and Environmental Medicine at the Sahlgrenska Academy at Gothenburg University. The commercial operations started in 2010 with the support of GU Ventures incubator, and the company is founded by inventors, key individuals, business angels and GU Ventures.