Visara Announces First Patient Dosed in ASCEND Phase 2b Trial of VIS-101 in Wet AMD

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Head-to-head trial designed to evaluate VIS-101's potential for sustained disease control with extended treatment intervals

Phase 2a results showed approximately 50% of patients in the 6 mg treatment-naïve cohort remained retreatment-free six months after the last loading dose

ROCKVILLE, Md., Nov. 18, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Visara, Inc. ("Visara"), a majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary of NovaBridge Biosciences, Inc. ("NovaBridge") (NASDAQ: NBP), today announced that the first patient has been dosed in its ASCEND study, a randomized Phase 2b trial designed to evaluate the efficacy, safety and durability of VIS-101, including its potential to enable extended treatment intervals after monthly loading doses, in patients with wet age-related macular degeneration ("wet AMD"). The approximately 244-patient study is evaluating two doses of VIS-101 (6 mg and 9 mg) head-to-head against 2 mg aflibercept and is being conducted in China in partnership with Everest Medicines (HKEX 1952.HK).

VIS-101 is a tetravalent, dual vascular endothelial growth factor ("VEGF")-A and angiopoietin-2 ("ANG-2") inhibitor, purpose-designed to have best-in-class efficacy and durability. VIS-101 is in development for retinal vascular diseases, including wet AMD, diabetic macular edema (DME) and retinal vein occlusion (RVO). In the randomized, dose ranging Phase 2a study, VIS-101 demonstrated rapid, robust, and durable treatment responses in wet AMD, along with a favorable safety profile. Approximately 50% of patients in the 6 mg treatment-naïve cohort remained retreatment-free six months after the last loading dose, supporting VIS-101's potential for best-in-class durability.

"Dosing the first patient in the ASCEND study marks an important milestone for VIS-101 and brings us closer to determining whether the encouraging durability we saw in the Phase 2a trial can translate into meaningfully longer treatment intervals for patients with wet AMD," said Jeffrey Nau, Ph.D., MMS, President and Chief Executive Officer of Visara. "While available therapies have transformed the treatment of wet AMD, the need for frequent injections remains a significant burden for patients, caregivers and physicians. Our goal with VIS-101 is to maintain strong disease control while enabling patients to go substantially longer between injections following loading. The ASCEND study is designed to test that potential directly against an established standard of care."

The Phase 2b ASCEND study is designed to build on the Phase 2a findings and further evaluate VIS-101 head-to-head against aflibercept dosed every eight weeks. Following monthly loading doses, patients receiving VIS-101 can be retreated based on protocol-specified criteria, allowing the study to evaluate VIS-101's potential to maintain disease control with treatment intervals of up to seven months. The study will also help determine the dose(s) to advance into VIS-101's global Phase 3 program.

"VIS-101 was purpose-designed with durability in mind, combining tetravalent inhibition of VEGF-A and ANG-2 with favorable pharmacokinetic properties intended to extend its activity in the eye," said Cadmus Rich, M.D., M.B.A, Chief Medical Officer of Visara. "The encouraging durability observed in the Phase 2a study provides a strong scientific foundation for the ASCEND study, which is designed to further characterize VIS-101's properties in a larger, head-to-head trial."

Wet AMD affects more than 20 million people globally[1], and treatment remains burdensome. In the United States, patients receive an average of 7.5 anti-VEGF injections in their first year of treatment[2].

About VIS-101
VIS-101 is a tetravalent, dual VEGF-A x ANG-2 inhibitor purpose-designed to have best-in-class efficacy and durability. VIS-101 is in development for retinal vascular diseases, including wet AMD, diabetic macular edema (DME) and retinal vein occlusion (RVO), which affect more than 57 million people globally[1]. VIS-101's bispecific, tetravalent design format provides more binding sites and increased VEGF-A and ANG-2 affinity and avidity, for rapid, robust and class-leading durable responses. VIS-101 has completed initial safety and dose-escalation studies in both the United States and China and a randomized, dose-ranging 2a study in China (NCT05456828). VIS-101 is currently being evaluated in the dose-determining Phase 2b ASCEND study, with initiation of the global Phase 3 program planned as early as 2027.

About the ASCEND Phase 2b Trial
ASCEND is a randomized, quadruple-masked, active-controlled, head-to-head Phase 2b study (NCT07798375) to evaluate VIS-101 (aka AM712 or ASKG712) in approximately 244 treatment naïve patients with wet AMD in China. Patients will be randomized to either 6 mg or 9 mg VIS-101, or 2 mg aflibercept, a standard-of-care anti-VEGF therapy. All patients will initially

receive three monthly doses of either VIS-101 or aflibercept and can then be retreated based on protocol-specified retreatment criteria that are the same for all groups up to Month 9. The main objectives are to determine the dose(s) to be studied in Phase 3 clinical trials and establish the initial durability with treatment intervals up to seven months after three loading doses.

About Visara
Visara is a clinical-stage biotechnology company dedicated to developing next-generation biologic therapies for ophthalmic diseases affecting both the front and back of the eye. From the cornea to the retina, Visara pursues the full spectrum of ocular disease as vision is irreplaceable, and the unmet need is profound. Visara is a majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary of NovaBridge Biosciences (NASDAQ: NBP). Its pipeline includes VIS-101, a tetravalent VEGF-A × ANG-2 peptibody being developed for neovascular retinal diseases, and VIS-102, a next-generation modified recombinant human nerve growth factor therapy being developed for neurotrophic keratitis. Visara also holds an exclusive option to acquire VIS-103, a bioengineered, trivalent, multifunctional peptibody incorporating a core interferon-mimetic for the treatment of ocular surface squamous neoplasia (OSSN).

For more information, please visit www.visara-vision.com.

About NovaBridge Biosciences
NovaBridge Biosciences ("NovaBridge") (NASDAQ: NBP) is a global biotechnology company focused on identifying, developing and maximizing the value of differentiated therapeutic assets. NovaBridge advances programs through clinical development and pursues the financing and partnering strategies best suited to each opportunity.

NovaBridge's portfolio is led by givastomig, a Claudin 18.2 × 4-1BB bispecific antibody being developed for the potential treatment of gastrointestinal malignancies, and Visara, its majority-owned ophthalmology subsidiary. Through Visara, NovaBridge is building a diversified ophthalmology franchise designed to address unmet needs across diseases of the front and back of the eye.

NovaBridge's objective is to build a sustainable biotechnology company by repeatedly identifying differentiated innovation, advancing it efficiently, and bringing novel therapies to patients through the path best suited to each opportunity.

For more information, please visit www.novabridge.com and follow us on LinkedIn.

About Everest Medicines
Everest Medicines is a biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering, developing, manufacturing and commercializing innovative pharmaceutical products that address critical unmet medical needs for patients in global markets. The management team of Everest Medicines has deep expertise and an extensive track record both in China and with leading global pharmaceutical companies. The Company owns a global manufacturing base of commercial scale in Jiashan, Zhejiang Province, and has established a comprehensive GMP production quality management system in accordance with China, EU, and WHO standards.

The Company’s therapeutic areas of focus include autoimmune, ophthalmology, critical care, and CKM (cardiovascular, kidney, and metabolic) diseases. Everest Medicines has developed a fully integrated commercialization platform that combines omnichannel commercial capabilities with end-to-end product lifecycle management. Its pharmaceutical distribution capabilities further complement its existing manufacturing and commercialization operations, supporting efficient product supply and delivery to the market.

Leveraging its proprietary mRNA platform, the Company is advancing its existing pipeline, including mRNA in vivo CAR-T and mRNA cancer vaccines, while selectively expanding into additional high-value therapeutic areas with blockbuster potential, and accelerating its global expansion.

For more information, please visit the Company’s website: www.everestmedicines.com.

Forward Looking Statements
This announcement contains forward-looking statements. These statements are made under the “safe harbor” provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements can be identified by terminology such as “will,” “expects,” “believes,” “designed to,” “anticipates,” “future,” “intends,” “plans,” “potential,” “estimates,” “confident,” and similar terms or the negative thereof. NovaBridge and Visara may also make written or oral forward-looking statements in NovaBridge’s periodic reports to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”), in its annual report to shareholders, in press releases and other written materials and in oral statements made by its officers, directors or employees to third parties. Statements that are not historical facts, including statements about NovaBridge’s and Visara’s beliefs and expectations, are forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements in this press release include, without limitation, statements regarding: the potential benefits of Visara’s product candidates, including VIS-101 ; the strategy, clinical development, plans, timing, results, safety and efficacy of Visara’s drug candidates, including the planned enrollment, dosing, treatment intervals and objectives of the ASCEND Phase 2b study and the planned initiation of VIS-101’s global Phase 3 program as early as 2027; and NovaBridge’s and Visara’s strategies and plans for advancing their therapeutic programs, building a diversified ophthalmology franchise and bringing novel therapies to patients. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in these forward-looking statements, including but not limited to the following: NovaBridge’s or Visara’s ability to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of their drug candidates; the clinical results for their drug candidates, which may or may not support further development or New Drug Application/Biologics License Application approval or eligibility for accelerated approval pathway or receipt of accelerated approval; the content and timing of decisions made by the relevant regulatory authorities, including the FDA, regarding regulatory approval of NovaBridge’s or Visara’s drug candidates; NovaBridge’s

or Visara's ability to achieve commercial success for their drug candidates, if approved; NovaBridge's or Visara's ability to obtain and maintain protection of intellectual property for their technology and drugs; NovaBridge's or Visara's reliance on third parties to conduct drug development, manufacturing and other services; NovaBridge's or Visara's limited operating history and their ability to obtain additional funding for operations and to complete the development and commercialization of their drug candidates; the impact of macroeconomic conditions, including inflation, tariffs, volatile interest rates, regulatory uncertainty, potential government shutdowns, volatility in the capital markets, and regional and other global events, including ongoing armed conflicts in different regions of the world; and those risks more fully discussed in the "Risk Factors" section in NovaBridge's annual report on Form 20-F filed with the SEC on April 7, 2026, and amended on June 16, 2026, as well as the discussions of potential risks, uncertainties, and other important factors in NovaBridge's subsequent filings with the SEC. All forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to NovaBridge. NovaBridge undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, except as may be required by law.

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1. Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci. 2021 Nov 24; 62 (14): 26. doi: 10.1167/iovs.62.14.26
2. Ophthalmol Retina. 2020 Feb; 4 (2): 122-133. doi: 10.1016/j.oret.2019.09.009