Rhythm Pharmaceuticals Launches Free Genetic Testing Program for Rare Genetic Disorders of Obesity

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-- Uncovering Rare Obesity program may help determine underlying cause of severe obesity --
-- Program increases access to genetic testing to improve diagnosis of rare genetic disorders of obesity --

Uncovering Rare Obesity is a free genetic testing program that may help determine if individuals have an underlying genetic cause of their severe obesity.

BOSTON, July 17, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Rhythm Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (Nasdaq:RYTM), a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of therapeutics for the treatment of rare genetic disorders of obesity, today announced the launch of Uncovering Rare Obesity, a free genetic testing program that may help determine if individuals have an underlying genetic cause of their severe obesity.

Severe obesity is epidemic in the United States, and Rhythm is focused on identifying people with early-onset obesity that may be caused by certain rare genetic variants. As part of these efforts, Rhythm has launched Uncovering Rare Obesity in order to increase access to genetic testing.

“Rhythm has several initiatives designed to advance the understanding of genetic causes of severe obesity, and Uncovering Rare Obesity broadens these efforts and brings access to genetic testing into the community setting,” said Keith Gottesdiener, M.D., Chief Executive Officer of Rhythm. “Uncovering Rare Obesity complements and adds to our growing program of sequencing and patient identification initiatives such as the GO-ID genotyping study, TEMPO Registry, ongoing collaborations with biobanks and our Phase 2 basket study.”

Rhythm is partnering with PreventionGenetics, a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA)-certified independent laboratory, to conduct the genetic testing for Uncovering Rare Obesity. This program only covers the cost of the test and excludes office visit, copay, sample collection, and any other related costs to a participant. In addition, as part of the program, licensed genetic counselors from PWN Health, a leading provider of professional guidance for diagnostic and genetic testing, are available to advise participating individuals.

“Currently available physician-ordered genetic testing panels are often cost prohibitive, while many consumer genetic tests are incomplete when it comes to genetic disorders of obesity. This makes it difficult to confirm an underlying genetic cause of severe obesity,” said Ethan Lazarus, M.D., President of the Clinical Nutrition Center and Vice President of the Obesity Medicine Association in Denver, CO. “Rhythm’s Uncovering Rare Obesity program is an important step in the understanding of these disorders that might help patients and their families find new diagnosis and treatment strategies in the years ahead.”

Rare genetic disorders of obesity may arise from variants in the genes comprising the MC4R pathway, a component of the central melanocortin pathway that plays a vital role in regulating energy intake and expenditure. People with early-onset severe obesity and insatiable hunger may be eligible to participate in the Uncovering Rare Obesity program. To qualify, a person must be either

2-18 years of age with a body mass index (BMI) in the 97th percentile or more, or 19 years and older with a BMI of 40 or more and a history of childhood obesity before age 10. Find more information about Uncovering Rare Obesity for the patient community at https://www.leadforrareobesity.com/genetic-testing-obesity/program and for healthcare professionals at https://www.uncommonobesity.com/free-genetic-test.

About Rhythm

Rhythm is a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of therapies for the treatment of rare genetic disorders of obesity. Rhythm is currently evaluating the efficacy and safety of setmelanotide, the company's first-in-class MC4R agonist, in Phase 3 studies in patients with Pro-opiomelanocortin (POMC) deficiency obesity, Leptin receptor (LEPR) deficiency obesity, Bardet-Biedl syndrome, and Alström syndrome. The company is leveraging the Rhythm Engine -- comprised of its Phase 2 basket study, TEMPO Registry, GO-ID genotyping study and Uncovering Rare Obesity program -- to improve the understanding, diagnosis and potentially the treatment of rare genetic disorders of obesity. For healthcare professionals, visit www.UNcommonObesity.com for more information. For patients and caregivers, visit www.LEADforRareObesity.com for more information. The company is based in Boston, MA.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains certain statements that are forward-looking within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and that involve risks and uncertainties, including statements regarding Rhythm's business strategy and goals, its research of potential patient populations, and its expectations regarding setmelanotide. Statements using word such as "expect", "goal", "anticipate", "believe", "may", "will", "plan" and similar terms are also forward looking statements. Such statements are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties, including but not limited to, our ability to enroll patients in clinical trials, the design and outcome of clinical trials, the impact of competition, the ability to achieve or obtain necessary regulatory approvals, risks associated with data analysis and reporting, and expenses, and other risks as may be detailed from time to time in our Annual Reports on Form 10-K and quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and other reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Except as required by law, we undertake no obligations to make any revisions to the forward-looking statements contained in this release or to update them to reflect events or circumstances occurring after the date of this release, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/2f542ca4-a90a-411a-be54-d22e28b7893e

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