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Exagen Appoints Debra Jeske Zack, M.D., Ph.D., as Chief Medical Officer, and Anja Kammesheidt, Ph.D., as Chief Scientific Officer

March 24, 2020

SAN DIEGO, March 24, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Exagen Inc. (Nasdaq: XGN), an organization dedicated to transforming the care continuum for patients suffering from autoimmune diseases, today announced the appointment of Debra Jeske Zack, M.D., Ph.D., as Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and Anja Kammesheidt, Ph.D., as Chief Scientific Officer (CSO). The addition of Drs. Zack and Kammesheidt to the Exagen team will strengthen the company as it continues to focus on clinical research and development initiatives to serve the needs of healthcare providers and their patients.

"Our focus has always been on improving outcomes for patients suffering from autoimmune diseases, which are very challenging to diagnose and treat. Both of these appointments bring in-depth experience and a singular understanding of autoimmune diseases, including lupus and rheumatoid arthritis," said Exagen President and CEO Ron Rocca. "As the company enters its next phase of growth, we are proud to have our senior leadership team fully aligned and committed to our mission of providing superior solutions to autoimmune healthcare providers and patients. Exagen is well-positioned to accelerate the growth of our existing AVISE tests while developing a pipeline of new testing products within the overlooked autoimmune space."

Dr. Zack is a board-certified rheumatologist with broad experience as a strategic biopharmaceutical executive in the development of therapeutics for autoimmune disease and will oversee the overall strategy and execution of the company's clinical development plans. She has extensive experience leading research, clinical development and medical affairs teams focusing on autoimmune disorders, highlighted by her role at Amgen as Global Development Lead for Enbrel, one of the best-selling pharmaceuticals in the world. Prior to joining Exagen, Dr. Zack served as Vice President, Clinical Development at Xencor, Inc.; Executive Director, Medical Scientific Leader, Biotherapeutics Development Unit at Novartis; and various positions in basic research, clinical development and medical affairs at Amgen. She was an associate professor treating rheumatology patients for 10 years at UCLA prior to joining industry. She received her undergraduate degree from Texas Christian University and her M.D. and Ph.D. from the University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas before completing her residency and rheumatology fellowship at the UCLA School of Medicine. Dr. Zack replaces Dr. Arthur Weinstein, who is leaving the CMO position to focus his attentions as the chair of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Dr. Kammesheidt has deep experience as a strategic biotech executive in the development of novel testing solutions and will be responsible for the oversight and execution of the company's research and development plans. Dr. Kammesheidt will also represent Exagen as the scientific leader with external collaborators, scientific advisory boards, key scientific meetings and investment community activities. Over the course of her career, she has built multiple successful diagnostics companies with direct responsibility for all R&D activities. This expertise, which includes biomarker discovery, will be invaluable in her new role. Prior to joining Exagen, Dr. Kammesheidt served as Chief Scientific Officer at Ambry Genetics and Pathway Genomics, and also held R&D positions at Agendia Inc. and Purdue Pharma. She received her undergraduate degree and Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine, and conducted her post-doctoral training at the University of California, San Diego. Dr. Kammesheidt replaces Dr. Thierry Dervieux, who has been serving as a consultant to Exagen since his resignation from the company in Q4 2019 to pursue other opportunities.

About Exagen Inc.

Exagen is dedicated to transforming the care continuum for patients suffering from debilitating and chronic autoimmune diseases by enabling timely differential diagnosis and optimizing therapeutic intervention. Exagen has developed and is commercializing a portfolio of innovative testing products under its AVISE® brand, several of which are based on its proprietary Cell-Bound Complement Activation Products, or CB-CAPs, technology.

Exagen's goal is to enable rheumatologists to improve care for patients through the differential diagnosis, prognosis and monitoring of complex autoimmune and autoimmune-related diseases, including SLE and rheumatoid arthritis.

Forward Looking Statements

To the extent that statements contained in this press release are not descriptions of historical facts regarding Exagen, they are forward-looking statements reflecting the current beliefs and expectations of management made pursuant to the safe harbor of the Private Securities Reform Act of 1995. Such forward looking statements involve substantial risks and uncertainties that could cause Exagen's future results, performance or achievements to differ significantly from those expressed or implied by the forward looking statements. Exagen undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward looking statements. For a description of the risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ from those expressed in these forward looking statements, as well as risks relating to Exagen's business in general, please refer to Exagen's quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2019 and any subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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