



## **Carilion Biomedical Institute Invests in OcuCure Therapeutics**

*Company is developing a novel therapy for age-related macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness in the developed world.*

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**Roanoke, VA (January 6, 2006)** The Carilion Biomedical Institute (CBI) is pleased to announce an investment in OcuCure Therapeutics, Inc. Roanoke based OcuCure is developing new proprietary drugs and technologies to reduce and prevent vision loss caused by eye diseases. OcuCure's compounds have a novel mechanism of action and will introduce a new wave of differentiated drugs for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Research results have been very encouraging, and additional animal studies will be conducted at T.R. Lee Center for Ocular Pharmacology at Eastern Virginia Medical School early this year.

"We believe that OcuCure possesses tremendous potential to alleviate AMD and hopefully prevent blindness in millions of people. CBI is pleased to fund a Roanoke based company that is dedicated to preventing millions of people from suffering through such a catastrophic visual outcome as the loss of eyesight," states Daniel Barchi, President of the Carilion Biomedical Institute.

AMD is a debilitating eye disease and is the leading cause of legal blindness in developed countries. In the US nearly 15 million people have been diagnosed with this condition and almost one in three people over the age of 75 have AMD. The disease is

strongly age related and has two forms- dry or wet AMD. The wet form of AMD causes rapid vision loss and can lead to blindness. About 10-15% of AMD patients have wet AMD.

The approximately 200,000 new cases of wet AMD in the US each year represents over a \$1 Billion annual market opportunity. It is estimated that the ex-US market is comparable. As the population ages, the prevalence of AMD is expected to increase. It is anticipated that OcuCure will establish a significant market position. OcuCure is currently seeking Series A investment to take the initial product through the investigational new drug (IND) process with the FDA.

Currently, there are limited options for the treatment of wet AMD. Many factors contribute to AMD by promoting the growth of new abnormal retinal blood vessels. This process is called angiogenesis. These new vessels are fragile and leak fluid and blood into the eye causing rapid vision loss. The key to success is inhibiting the sprouting of these new blood vessels and regressing, if possible, the partially grown new blood vessels. To achieve both is difficult. The current drugs are limited in their efficacy as they only work on a single pathway. OcuCure has a totally new mechanism of action with dual activity – both anti-angiogenic and angiolytic. This novel drug inhibits new blood vessels from sprouting (anti-angiogenesis) and causes regression of partially grown blood vessels (angiolytic). Therefore, OcuCure provides a more complete therapy for AMD. Additionally, because the lead compound is a small molecule, it is well suited for development of a topical eye drop dosage. Current AMD drugs are injected directly into the eye.

“OcuCure provides the next generation therapy for AMD,” states Sunder Malkani, OcuCure President and CEO. “Early pre-clinical results are very promising.

We have assembled a world-class team with a proven track record of success. Investors are placing a premium on AMD companies, and I am very pleased with the support provided by CBI,” Mr. Malkani goes on to further state.

CBI funded the original research behind OcuCure’s technology at the University of Virginia.

**Ocucure Therapeutics Inc.** ([www.OcuCure.com](http://www.OcuCure.com)) is an early stage biopharmaceutical company developing new proprietary drugs and technologies to reduce and prevent vision loss caused by eye diseases. The company’s lead product targets wet Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of blindness in developed countries. The lead compound has been identified from a portfolio of numerous viable compounds. OcuCure Therapeutics will bring to market a new wave of differentiated drugs for the treatment of AMD.

**Carilion Biomedical Institute (CBI)** ([www.biomedicalinstitute.org](http://www.biomedicalinstitute.org)) is dedicated to improving the health and lives of people worldwide by partnering with scientists, researchers, and the medical and business communities to create major advances in healthcare. CBI fosters biomedical research at the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech and brings promising technologies to market through rigorous medical, financial, operational and market analysis. CBI also connects early-stage companies to venture capital, strategic real estate, management talent, manufacturing partners and healthcare customers. Start-up biomedical companies, entrepreneurs and inventors with a business plan or biomedical concept that are interested in working with CBI should contact the Carilion Biomedical Institute at [biomedicalinstitute.com](http://biomedicalinstitute.com) or call 540 581 0123.  
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