



News Release

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MEDPOINTE ACQUIRES 100% OF ASTELIN® RIGHTS IN US AND CANADA

Acquires Joint Venture Interest, Intellectual Property Not Already Owned

SOMERSET, NJ – September 9, 2002 – In its third strategic move this year designed to capture the full commercial potential of its flagship product, the anti-allergy nasal spray ASTELIN®, MedPointe announced today it has acquired exclusive, royalty-free US and Canadian rights to this FDA-approved prescription pharmaceutical, including associated patents and commercialization rights.

Prior to the transaction, the product's US commercial rights were owned by a Joint Venture between MedPointe (60% owner) and Asta Medica, Inc. (40%), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Viartis GmbH & Co. KG. Viartis will continue to provide to MedPointe the product's active ingredient, azelastine, under a negotiated long-term supply agreement. The purchase price and the terms of the long-term supply agreement were not disclosed.

The transaction follows closely on the heels of MedPointe's earlier announcement that its prescription pharmaceutical division, Wallace Pharmaceuticals, has entered into a multi-year ASTELIN co-promotion arrangement with Sepracor (NASDAQ: SEPR), whereby Sepracor's 450-person sales force will co-promote the product in the US to an array of physician specialists, including pediatricians, allergists, ENTs, pulmonologists, and

primary care physicians. Also, earlier this year, in an effort to raise ASTELIN's profile in the allergy/rhinitis marketplace, MedPointe increased the Wallace Pharmaceuticals' field sales force from 182 to 304 sales representatives. The Sepracor sales force, added to MedPointe's existing 304-person field sales force, will almost double the detailing effort behind ASTELIN.

In commenting on this important initiative for MedPointe, Anthony H. Wild, Chairman and CEO of MedPointe, said, "The purchase of full ownership rights to ASTELIN in the US and Canada is of tremendous strategic and financial importance to MedPointe. Combined with the expansion of our pharmaceutical field sales force earlier this year and our recently announced co-promotion arrangement with Sepracor, we are in an excellent position to drive the growth and profitability of this emerging, unique specialty pharmaceutical product."

ASTELIN, a FDA-approved nasal spray, occupies a unique position within the antihistamine marketplace. It is the only non-steroidal product indicated for use in treating both seasonal allergic rhinitis and non-allergic, non-seasonal, vasomotor rhinitis. The product, which is patent protected until 2010, has been approved for use in adults and children five years of age and older.

Allergic rhinitis is an allergen-induced inflammation of the membranes lining the nose. Allergic rhinitis includes seasonal allergic rhinitis, which is an allergic reaction that occurs due to wind-borne pollen exposure. Common symptoms include sneezing, often accompanied by a runny or clogged nose; coughing and postnasal drip; itchy eyes, nose and throat; and red, burning or watery eyes.

Non-allergic vasomotor rhinitis is caused by exposure to common indoor and outdoor triggers, including strong odors such as tobacco smoke, perfumes, colognes, hairspray, soaps, detergents, cleaners, paint, and car exhaust fumes. Weather, especially changes in humidity and temperature, can also trigger non-allergic vasomotor rhinitis. Spicy foods

and alcohol can trigger allergy-like symptoms such as runny nose, nasal congestion, sneezing, and postnasal drip.

MedPointe was represented on the transaction by Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.; Kirkland and Ellis; and Simpson Thacher & Bartlett. Viatris was represented by Dr. Ferber & Partner GmbH and Lovells.

Viatris GmbH & Co. KG is a Frankfurt, Germany-headquartered multinational pharmaceutical company which was recently spun out of Degussa AG. Viatris is privately held and is currently controlled by the international private equity firm, Advent International. Viatris has approximately 2,600 employees worldwide and operates in all major European and North American markets, as well as Brazil. The company reported annual turnover in 2001 of €480 Million.

MedPointe is a privately held company located in Somerset, New Jersey. Its prescription pharmaceutical products division, Wallace Pharmaceuticals, specializes in respiratory, cough/cold, pediatric and central nervous system products and maintains a manufacturing facility in Decatur, Ill. Wampole Laboratories, MedPointe's diagnostics division, distributes a wide range of immunoassay-based diagnostic tests for use by hospitals, physicians and reference laboratories. It was announced on August 8, 2002 that MedPointe has entered into a definitive agreement to sell Wampole Laboratories to Inverness Medical Innovations, Inc. For more information on MedPointe, Wallace Pharmaceuticals or Wampole Laboratories, visit www.medpointeinc.com.

Astelin is a registered trademark of Wallace Laboratories.

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