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## Media Release

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### **Kinoxis Therapeutics launched to develop novel anti-addiction drugs**

- Spinout of technology from the University of Sydney
- Exclusive licence for the development of novel compounds for addiction
- Company founded with \$3.9 million financing round led by Uniseed

**Melbourne and Sydney, Australia, Feb 15, 2018:** Kinoxis Therapeutics is pleased to announce it has entered into an exclusive licence agreement with the University of Sydney to continue the development of a range of novel therapeutic compounds for the treatment of addiction and substance use disorders. The company also announced the completion of a \$3.9m initial investment round, led by university venture fund Uniseed, to progress the lead candidate through pre-clinical testing.

This is the first direct investment by Uniseed into technology solely owned by the University.

Substance use disorders, including the abuse of alcohol, illicit and prescription drugs, represent a considerable treatment challenge for health care professionals. There is only a limited number of drugs approved for substance use disorders and no approved pharmacological treatments specifically for methamphetamine or cocaine use disorders.

Oxytocin is the focus of much interest because of its central role in the positive regulation of social behaviour and its inhibitory effects on addictive behaviours.

The research group led by Professor Iain McGregor at the University of Sydney was the first to show oxytocin administration to laboratory animals causes long-term increases in [sociability and a lasting decrease in alcohol](#) and [methamphetamine](#) self-administration.

A collaboration between the School of Chemistry and School of Psychology led by Professor Michael Kassiou and Professor McGregor resulted in the group researching small compounds that stimulate the central oxytocin system, have oral bioavailability and demonstrate favorable pharmacokinetic profiles.

The lead candidate being developed by the research team at the University of Sydney, SOC-1, is a small, orally bioavailable compound that mimics the anti-addictive properties of oxytocin.

Founding CEO of Kinosis Hugh Alsop said the formation of Kinosis to advance the SOC-1 candidate through a pre-clinical program was an “important step towards the development of a potential new therapeutic for addiction disorders”.

“The strong support shown by our investors will allow us to develop the data package required to commence human clinical trials,” Mr Alsop said.

University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Michael Spence said the partnership could play an important role in tackling the devastating impact of addiction by enabling the “translation of the addiction research from discovery to a well-funded and resourced commercial venture”.

“The ultimate aim is to develop another tool for physicians to have in treating their patients as they progress in seeking treatment and recovery from addiction,” Dr Spence said.

Uniseed CEO Peter Devine said the partnership was a significant achievement for Uniseed and demonstrated its ability to put together a development plan and budget alongside its partners, lead the investment and raise significant early stage capital.

“We are excited to be investing in high-quality Australian medical research from a world class research team at the University of Sydney, in a program that is developing new treatments for addiction disorders where there is a significant unmet clinical need,” Dr Devine said.

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