



**For Immediate Release**

**July 1, 2020**

## **Canadian Firm Plays Key Role in COVID-19 Vaccine Development Project with BioNTech and Pfizer**

**Vancouver, B.C.** – Acuitas Therapeutics, a Vancouver-based biotechnology company that specializes in the development of delivery systems for nucleic acid therapeutics based on lipid nanoparticles (LNP), is seeing its already substantial reputation as a global expert in this area go further. This is because the company is playing a key role in the development of a COVID-19 vaccine with its collaborator BioNTech, which is partnered on this project with Pfizer Inc. BioNTech has just released preliminary data from its clinical studies on a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine (<https://bit.ly/3gpjJVh>).

mRNA is a new technological advancement that allows vaccines to be developed in response to a novel virus more quickly, compared to conventional approaches. In the development of an mRNA vaccine, scientists can make a synthetic mRNA that provides the body with the information that is needed to make a viral protein. Our immune system then recognizes this viral protein and develops a protective response. However, there are two challenges in doing this. The mRNA is fragile and if injected into the body, it would break down very quickly. Secondly, it is a large biological molecule and it cannot get into our cells on its own.

Acuitas Therapeutics provides lipid nanoparticles – tiny “delivery vehicles” – that protect the mRNA after it is injected. Acuitas’ proprietary lipid nanoparticles carry the mRNA. In simple terms, it takes the mRNA safely through the body and delivers it into the cell, exactly where it needs to be. Once delivered, the mRNA – the vaccine – is able to do its very important job. The Acuitas LNP delivery system is a key component of mRNA vaccines and the globally important efforts to eradicate COVID-19.

“Developing a COVID-19 vaccine to address the pandemic is a global effort. We are delighted about our partnership with Acuitas who are supporting us in bringing new mRNA vaccines for unmet medical needs to people worldwide,” said BioNTech CEO and Co-founder Ugur Sahin.

“We are honoured to work with a global leader such as BioNTech, providing our technology to support their mRNA COVID-19 vaccine development,” said Acuitas Therapeutics President and CEO, Dr. Thomas Madden. He added, “There is an urgent need for a vaccine for COVID-19 and



the first data from BioNTech's clinical studies is encouraging. People all over the world are anxious for a vaccine and BioNTech's clinical data puts us one step closer to providing one."

### **About BioNTech**

Biopharmaceutical New Technologies (BioNTech) is a next generation immunotherapy company pioneering novel therapies for cancer and other serious diseases. The Company exploits a wide array of computational discovery and therapeutic drug platforms for the rapid development of novel biopharmaceuticals. Its broad portfolio of oncology product candidates includes individualized and off-the-shelf mRNA-based therapies, innovative chimeric antigen receptor T cells, bi-specific checkpoint immuno-modulators, targeted cancer antibodies and small molecules. Based on its deep expertise in mRNA vaccine development and in-house manufacturing capabilities, BioNTech and its collaborators are developing multiple mRNA vaccine candidates for a range of infectious diseases alongside its diverse oncology pipeline. BioNTech has established a broad set of relationships with multiple global pharmaceutical collaborators, including Genmab, Sanofi, Bayer Animal Health, Genentech, a member of the Roche Group, Genevant, Fosun Pharma, and Pfizer.

### **BioNTech Forward-looking Statements**

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" of BioNTech within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements may include, but may not be limited to, statements concerning: BioNTech's efforts to combat COVID-19; the BNT162 mRNA vaccine program; the collaboration between BioNTech and Pfizer. Any forward-looking statements in this press release are based on BioNTech current expectations and beliefs of future events, and are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially and adversely from those set forth in or implied by such forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to: competition to create a vaccine for Covid-19 and potential difficulties. For a discussion of these and other risks and uncertainties, see BioNTech's Annual Report on Form 20-F filed with the SEC on March 31, 2020, which has been filed with the SEC and is available on the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). All information in this press release is as of the date of the release, and BioNTech undertakes no duty to update this information unless required by law.

### **About Acuitas Therapeutics**

Founded in February 2009, Vancouver-based Acuitas Therapeutics (<https://acuitastx.com/>) is a private biotechnology company that specializes in the development of delivery systems for nucleic



acid therapeutics based on lipid nanoparticles. The company partners with pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology organizations and academic institutes to advance nucleic acid therapeutics to the clinical trial phase and to the marketplace. The team works with partners to develop new therapies to address unmet clinical needs based on its internationally recognized capabilities in delivery technology. Acuitas Therapeutics has agreements in place for their proprietary lipid nanotechnology to be used in the development of several COVID-19 vaccines – with BioNTech now publishing data from their clinical studies. Two other collaborators have also recently initiated clinical studies.