Spine consultant and clinical advisor Mr Nick Birch appointed as NED at OrthoSon

Chairing the Clinical Advisory Group to guide clinical development strategy

Oxford, UK, March 21 2022 – OrthoSon, which is developing minimally invasive and motion-restoring treatments for low back pain based on ultrasound and in-situ curing hydrogel implants, is pleased to announce the appointment of spine consultant Mr Nick Birch FRCS (Orth) to its Board as a Non-Executive Director. Mr Birch, formerly a clinical advisor to the company, is also Chairman of the company's Clinical Advisory Group. The Group will help steer OrthoSon as it refines its clinical development strategy. Targeting a market worth in excess of $1bn, the company expects its spinal disc restoration approach to be disruptively cost effective and safe compared with gold standard surgical approaches, allowing patients to be treated on a day-case basis.

Mr Birch is a Consultant spinal specialist and has a particular expertise in diagnosing and treating complex pain and neurological disorders associated with the spine. With an interest in innovative solutions to treat spinal pain associated with disc degeneration, he has advised on the development of several bone and disc repair technologies. Mr Birch is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, a Fellow of the British Orthopaedic Association, and holds memberships of the British Associations of Spine Surgeons, the North American Spine Society and the Society for Back Pain Research.

Drs Aaron Calodney MD and Kris Radcliff MD join Mr Birch in the Clinical Advisory Group. Both based in the US, they are active in spinal pain management and spinal surgery respectively and have previously been advisors to OrthoSon. The company is expecting to grow the group in due course.

Mr Nick Birch, NED at OrthoSon, said, 'The combination of OrthoSon's hydrogel and ultrasound-based technologies has huge potential to restore disc motion and improve the quality of life for sufferers of low back pain, the largest cause of disability globally. I'm delighted to join the company's Board and chair the Clinical Advisory Group as the development of its technology progresses.'

Rich Simmonds, CEO of OrthoSon, said, 'Nick has given us valuable counsel for several years and we are pleased to welcome him to the OrthoSon Board as we refine our clinical development strategy. Formation of the Clinical Advisory Group, which he chairs, reflects our progress towards first-in-human studies.'

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About OrthoSon

OrthoSon is developing an ultrasound-based incisionless motion-restoring treatment for lower back and neck pain. A spin-out of the University of Oxford, it raised £1.8m in seed funding in November 2019 led by Oxford Technology and Innovations EIS Fund and its advisor Oxford Investment Consultants. It has assembled a leading team for product and corporate development, including CEO Rich Simmonds, who has over 25 years of medical technology experience. Company co-founder and Director of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Oxford, Professor Constantin Coussios FREng, is Chief Technology Officer. He is a therapeutic ultrasound expert and was also involved in the establishment of OrganOx and OxSonics Therapeutics. The company has received £1.45m to date in grant funding from Innovate UK, the UK's innovation agency, to progress its technology towards clinical trials.

OrthoSon's patent-protected technology uses a combination of high intensity, high precision focussed ultrasound, gas-stabilising solid particles and injectable hydrogel, all delivered through a small needle directly into the degenerated disc. After the particles are injected into the disc, externally delivered focussed ultrasound is used to implode them repeatedly, causing breakdown of the nucleus (centre) of the degenerated disc. OrthoSon's hydrogel is then injected through the original needle, where it cures (sets) to form a replacement nucleus that restores the function of the spinal segment.

The company believes its spinal disc restoration approach to be disruptively cost effective and safe compared with the current gold standard surgical approaches. Current approaches, including spinal fusion and disc replacement, are extremely costly, highly invasive and often show poor outcomes, frequently leaving patients reliant on long term medication including opioids to manage their pain.

Lower back or neck pain is the largest cause of disability globally (Global Burden of Disease Study 2015; Lancet 2016; 388: 1603-58) that creates an enormous economic burden, with the costs of treatment, productivity loss and sickness leave exceeding $100 billion per annum in the USA (US Spending on Personal Health Care and Public Health, 1996-2013; JAMA 2016;316(24):2627-2646) and £12 billion pa in the UK (Pain 2000 84: 95-103). www.orthoson.com