

Servier in Cardiovascular Medicine

- Backgrounder -

About Servier

Servier is France's leading independent pharmaceutical company and the country's second largest drug company worldwide. R&D at Servier spans a range of therapeutic fields, with the main areas of focus being cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, oncology, metabolic disorders and rheumatology. In the field of cardiovascular disease in particular, Servier is one of the principal research organisations dedicated to the development of new medicines.

Cardiovascular commitment

Servier has a long-standing interest in the field of cardiovascular disease. In testament to this, 63% of Servier's global turnover from medicines is made up of drugs targeted at cardiovascular diseases. Servier is unique among global pharmaceutical companies in that all the cardiovascular products it has introduced have stemmed from its own research efforts.

Coversyl® (perindopril) is Servier's leading product, accounting for 31% of global turnover. This ACE inhibitor is licensed for the treatment of high blood pressure and heart failure. In September 2005, Coversyl was approved in the USA and Europe for the treatment of patients with stable coronary artery disease (CAD) to reduce the risk of cardiac events. Other countries worldwide have already approved Coversyl for a similar indication.

Servier's cardiovascular profile also includes Vastarel MR® (trimetazidine) for stable angina, Hyperium® (rilmenidine), Natrilix® SR (indapamide), Preterax® (perindopril / indapamide) for hypertension and Procoralan® (ivabradine), the first and only selective and specific inhibitor of the I_f channel in the sinus node for the potential treatment of myocardial ischemia.

Ongoing research

Servier has several new promising drugs in its cardiovascular pipeline:

- A new agent for the prevention of cardiovascular events in stroke patients has just entered a Phase III clinical programme. This drug has antithrombotic, antivasoconstrictive and antiatherosclerotic properties
- Additionally, Servier has identified a series of specific inhibitors of thrombin. Thrombin is a key protein involved in the coagulation cascade which is integral to the process of blood clotting. The new thrombin inhibitors have a novel oral method of administration. Potential therapeutic applications for such a class of drug are wide-reaching and encompass all aspects of the prevention and cure of thrombosis, both arterial and venous.

As part of its cardiovascular R&D programme, Servier has forged alliances with various university departments, including structural chemistry, molecular biology and applied pharmacology. The aim of these partnerships, which have been running for several years, is to develop novel chemical classes with antioxidant activity and the ability to enhance the function of mitochondria.

Mitochondria are the key energy powerhouses within cells whose function is impaired in many diseases in which ischemia plays a major role.

Servier and landmark clinical trials

Servier has been involved in several large-scale outcomes clinical trials for several years. These independent, investigator-led trials include PROGRESS¹, EUROPA^{2,3,4}, HYVET⁵, ADVANCE⁶ and ASCOT⁷, PREAMI⁸ and PEP-CHF⁹ – all will have major implications in the management of cardiovascular disease.

ADVANCE (Action in Diabetes and Vascular Disease: Preterax and Diamicron MR Controlled Evaluation), is a landmark trial which will provide important information about the separate and joint effects of intensive blood pressure lowering using Preterax (a low-dose, fixed combination of the ACE inhibitor perindopril and the diuretic indapamide) and intensive blood glucose lowering using a

gliclazide-based (Diamicon MR) regimen in a broad cross-section of high-risk individuals with type 2 diabetes. ADVANCE started in 2001 and patient recruitment ended in March 2003. The study will terminate in December 2007.

ADVANCE is an investigator-designed and investigator-conducted, international study which is coordinated by The George Institute for Health in Sydney, Australia. The ADVANCE chairman is John Chalmers. **Servier's involvement in diabetes**

30 years of commitment to diabetes care

SERVIER has been committed to optimization of the treatment of type 2 diabetes for over 30 years, through the discovery of original antidiabetic agents and numerous activities promoting research and education.

Long-term partnerships with leading organizations

SERVIER has long-term partnerships with the leading diabetes associations all over the world. Besides a large number of affiliations at the national and regional levels, SERVIER is a long-term contributor to, and Platinum corporate partner of the **International Diabetes Federation (IDF)**, and a Gold member of the **European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD)**.

Long-term sponsorship of key projects

SERVIER is the long-term sponsor of a number of important organizations in the world of diabetes. These include the **Diabetes Education Study Group (DESG)** of the EASD, since 1980, and the **Mediterranean Group for the Study of Diabetes (MGSD)**, since 1985. Other prestigious projects sponsored by SERVIER include the **Morgagni Prize**, since 1998, and **The Robert Turner Professorship in Diabetic Medicine**, from 2000.

EUGMS (European Union Geriatric Medicine Society)

The mass ageing of the European populations has been one of the major events of the end of the second millennium. SERVIER is the principal founding member of the EUGMS (European Union

Geriatric Medicine Society), which was launched in Paris in August 2001. The mission of the EUGMS is to develop geriatric medicine in the member states of the European Union (plus Norway and Switzerland) as an independent speciality caring for all older people with age-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes. The EUGMS will also promote evidence-based guidelines for the most efficacious preventive and treatment strategies for older people in the European Union.

SERVIER-DESG partnership

The main activities of the DESG-SERVIER partnership are: interactive seminars of 3 to 5 days which have already brought together around 4000 physicians and nurses from all over the world, DESG workshops organized during EASD congresses, and production and distribution of educational materials for doctors and patients alike.

Versions in several languages of the popular series **Patient Education Basics** and the **DESG Teaching Letters** are distributed world-wide, helping both doctors and patients to better manage the complexities of life with diabetes.

The SERVIER-DESG partnership has been always based on the international interactive workshops explaining to doctors the importance of TPE (therapeutic patient education). In order to develop this initiative the new STEP program has been just begun. Coordinated by the president of the DESG - Professor A. Maldonato - this project started with the STEP 1 - a multinational inquiry into the educational needs of Health Care Providers (HCPs). The STEP 2 meeting reviewed the results of this inquiry and introduced a brand new basic TPE curriculum to international specialists in education, thus creating the background for a series of STEP 3 meetings in different countries. STEP 3 meetings will be conducted by these same specialists (participants at STEP 2), will be addressed to HCPs, and will be adapted to different TPE national needs according to the STEP 1 results.

MGSD

Since 1995 SERVIER has been cooperating with the **Mediterranean Group for the Study of Diabetes**. Presided over currently by Professor P. Drouin (from Nancy, France) this group focuses its activities on the exchange of experience, research, and knowledge between Mediterranean

countries. The main projects of the MGSD consist of: International meetings permitting an inventory of current knowledge and problems in epidemiology, prevention, nutrition, methods for improving metabolic control and diabetic education in the region, publication of a bulletin "Media news", since 1996, as a permanent medium to encourage information and contacts between members of the MGSD, and development of fellowships and travel grants for young physicians in order to promote training and expertise around the Southern Mediterranean countries.

Morgagni Prize

To encourage innovative research in diabetes and related metabolic disorders, SERVIER has sponsored the Morgagni Prize for outstanding European research in metabolism since 1998. These prizes are awarded under the auspices of the Faculty of Padova and are conferred every 2 years. They consist of a Morgagni Medal (gold medal and 20 000 USD) and Two Young Investigator Awards (silver medals and 8 000 USD).

The Robert Turner Professorship in Diabetic Medicine

As an example of the unique cooperation between a pioneering academic research institution and a leading research-based pharmaceutical company SERVIER recently endowed a new diabetes chair at Oxford: the Robert Turner Professorship in Diabetic Medicine. This project promises to attract an outstanding international figure in diabetes research to the new \$14.5 million Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism (OCDEM). Currently under construction, OCDEM will be the first in the world to truly integrate basic and clinical research, clinical care and patient education in hormone-related and metabolic diseases such as diabetes. It promises to become a pivotal focus for future international research in diabetology. The new chair will honor the career of Professor Robert Turner, former scientific director of the OCDEM, who died suddenly in August 1999, at the pinnacle of his career.

Dr. Jean-Philippe Seta, SERVIER's Chief Executive Officer, commented "SERVIER is proud to provide the endowment for this chair as a testimony to our long relationship with Professor Turner and Oxford University and as a measure of our commitment to diabetes research now and in the future."

All these long-term sponsorship projects are flagship examples of successful long-term cooperation between medical organizations and the pharmaceutical industry.

- Ends -

References:

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