

## Santhera Appoints New Chief Executive Officer

**Pratteln, Switzerland, November 4, 2019 – Santhera Pharmaceuticals (SIX: SANN) announces a strategic change to its management team with the appointment of Dario Eklund as CEO, effective December 1, 2019. Thomas Meier will continue as a Board Member and will chair the newly formed Board of Director’s Scientific Committee. He will also serve as a special advisor to Dario Eklund, ensuring a smooth transition in Santhera’s leadership.**

**Thomas Meier, PhD, Chief Executive Officer of Santhera**, said: “This is a very exciting time for Santhera. Puldysa® (idebenone) is under review by the European Medicines Agency as treatment for patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) and vamorolone, a first-in-class steroidal drug, is in a pivotal DMD trial. We anticipate market entries for these products from 2020 onwards and we are gearing up commercial preparations both in Europe and the US. As we transition to become a leader in innovative treatments for rare neuromuscular and pulmonary diseases it is important for Santhera to be led by a CEO with international commercial experience. Dario shares my belief in Santhera’s potential and excitement about the future opportunities for the Company and he will contribute the perfect blend of global commercial expertise and management skills to lead Santhera into the growth phase ahead. As member of the Board I look forward to supporting Dario in his new role.”

Dario Eklund joins Santhera from Vifor Pharma, where he most recently served as Chief Commercial Officer with full P&L responsibility for a global business with turnover in excess of CHF 1 billion and more than 1’000 employees. He was a member of Vifor’s Corporate Executive Committee and a member of the Board of Directors of the joint venture with Fresenius Medical Care (Vifor Fresenius Medical Care Renal Pharma). Prior to Vifor, Dario spent a decade in Boston as Vice President and a member of the Executive Committee at Organogenesis Inc., a Nasdaq-listed world leading company in regenerative medicine and cell therapy with three approved products. During his time the company experienced strong growth and rapid expansion with sales coming from Europe and USA (annual growth rates of 20-25% over a decade). He started his career with various roles in sales, global marketing, business development and general management at Novartis and Sanofi in a number of territories.

**Elmar Schnee, Chairman of Santhera**, said: “On behalf of the Board, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Thomas for his well-recognized achievements as founder and member of Santhera’s executive team since 2004, first as Chief Scientific Officer and then as CEO. Under his leadership, Santhera developed from a hopeful start-up into a fully integrated pharmaceutical company with a first product on the market and a very promising and innovative rare disease product pipeline addressing neuromuscular and pulmonary diseases with high unmet medical need. We are extremely pleased that he will continue to contribute his drive and scientific excellence as Chair of the Scientific Committee and member of the Board of Directors, supporting our ambition to turn innovative ideas into novel products. As we seek to broaden the scope of our business, Dario is a perfect fit as CEO. He has an exceptional track record as a commercial leader with experience in large pharma and biotech environments, and we are confident that he will successfully lead Santhera as we move along a strong path for the future.”

**Dario Eklund, CEO elect of Santhera**, commented: "It's an exciting time to be joining the Santhera team and to help drive its next phase of development. With two late-stage DMD drug candidates covering essentially the entire disease spectrum in all patients, Santhera is poised to become the world leader in an area where the unmet medical need is significant. I am looking forward to leading a strong and dedicated team and working alongside the Board and management team of Santhera to deliver on the Company's vision."

#### **About Santhera**

Santhera Pharmaceuticals (SIX: SANN) is a Swiss specialty pharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of innovative medicines for rare neuromuscular and pulmonary diseases with high unmet medical need. Santhera is building a Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) product portfolio to treat patients irrespective of causative mutations, disease stage or age. A marketing authorization application for Puldysa® (idebenone) is currently under review by the European Medicines Agency. Santhera has an option to license vamorolone, a first-in-class dissociative steroid currently investigated in a pivotal study in patients with DMD to replace standard corticosteroids. The clinical stage pipeline also includes POL6014 to treat cystic fibrosis (CF) and other neutrophilic pulmonary diseases, as well as omigapil and an exploratory gene therapy approach targeting congenital muscular dystrophies. Santhera out-licensed ex-North American rights to its first approved product, Raxone® (idebenone), for the treatment of Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy (LHON) to Chiesi Group. For further information, please visit [www.santhera.com](http://www.santhera.com).

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#### **For further information please contact:**

[public-relations@santhera.com](mailto:public-relations@santhera.com) or  
Eva Kalias, Head External Communications  
Phone: +41 78 671 98 86  
[eva.kalias@santhera.com](mailto:eva.kalias@santhera.com)

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