

**News release, Berne/Allschwil, March 13, 2002**

## **Berna Biotech and Hesperion create clinical development partnership for new vaccines**

**Berne/ Allschwil, Switzerland, March 13, 2002 – Berna Biotech Ltd (BBIN SWX) and Actelion Ltd (ATLN SWX) today announced the formation of a clinical development partnership between Berna Biotech and Hesperion Ltd, an independent company in which Actelion holds a controlling majority. The newly-created Center of Excellence for Vaccine Development will enhance Berna Biotech’s capacity for the rapid development of its rich pipeline of innovative vaccines to the highest standard. The partnership provides Hesperion with a unique opportunity to expand its expertise into another promising therapeutic area, and to share in the success of the joint development effort.**

The new partnership combines the strengths of both companies. Berna Biotech has long-standing experience in the clinical development of vaccines, with an excellent track record through the successful development of vaccines against hepatitis A (Epaxal®), cholera (Orochol®), typhoid fever (Vivotif®), and influenza (Inflexal V®). Hesperion has a proven track record in providing expert consulting services and performing rapid and high quality international clinical development. This novel model of pooling resources between two partners to form a Center of Excellence for Vaccine Development is expected to result in faster development times and increased cost-effectiveness of the development process.

“At Berna Biotech we have defined clinical development as a core competence for market success of our new range of vaccines. We are therefore delighted to complement our own expertise with that of Hesperion, a multinational but 'human-size' clinical development partner” said Achim Kaufhold, MD, Head of Clinical Research & Medical Director Berna Biotech. “This will add know-how and resources to ensure timely development of our rich pipeline of innovative vaccines.”



“For Hesperion, the agreement with Berna Biotech is a model for a new concept in clinical development“ commented Vincent Charlon, PhD, CEO of Hesperion, adding, “This partnership not only allows us to contribute our expertise and services to successful product development of our partner, but also to share responsibility and success in development and market performance.”

The Center of Excellence for Clinical Development will be comprised of dedicated project teams, staffed by experts from both companies, and managed jointly according to defined budgets and development milestones. The Center will report to a joint steering committee, headed by Achim Kaufhold and Vincent Charlon. It will be situated at Hesperion's offices in Allschwil.

Under the terms of the contract, Hesperion grants Berna exclusive rights to its services in the field of clinical development of vaccines, except those for the treatment of cancer. Hesperion will be compensated on the basis of its services and contribution to development success on a project-specific basis. Berna will retain full rights to its products.

**About the partners:**

**Berna Biotech Ltd** (the former Swiss Serum & Vaccine Institute Berne), an independent biotechnology company in the field of immunization, is a leading developer and producer of viral and bacterial vaccines. In 2001, Berna Biotech, with more than 650 employees, generated sales of above CHF 300 million. Berna Biotech is a public company with a broad shareholder base. Its shares are listed on the Swiss Stock Exchange (BBIN SWX).

**Hesperion Ltd** is a multinational Clinical Development Organization with headquarters in Allschwil/Basel, Switzerland and offices in Breda, The Netherlands, Tel Aviv, Israel, and in North America (Philadelphia; San Francisco). Hesperion employs 150 clinical research professionals worldwide with expertise in medical and regulatory affairs, clinical operations and biometrics. Hesperion operations have been successfully audited by the EMEA and the US FDA. Hesperion is an independently operating company in which Actelion Ltd owns a controlling majority.

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**Actelion Ltd** is a biopharmaceutical company headquartered in Allschwil/Basel Switzerland and has a substantial US operation based in South San Francisco. Actelion is a leading player in innovative science related to the endothelium – the single layer of cells separating every blood vessel from the blood stream. Actelion focuses on the discovery, development and marketing of innovative drugs for significant unmet medical needs. Actelion shares are traded on the Swiss Stock Exchange (SWX New Market ATLN).

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