Aastrom Biosciences to Present New Findings on Atheroprotective Effects of Ixmyelocel-T at Keystone Symposia on Atherosclerosis

ANN ARBOR, Mich., March 26, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Aastrom Biosciences, Inc. (Nasdaq:ASTM), the leading developer of patient-specific, expanded multicellular therapies for the treatment of severe, chronic cardiovascular diseases, today announced that results from a preclinical study demonstrating the potential atheroprotective properties of ixmyelocel-T will be presented in a poster session at the Keystone Symposia on the Molecular Basis of Vascular Inflammation and Atherosclerosis in Big Sky, Montana starting Sunday, March 25, 2012. The poster is entitled "Ixmyelocel-T therapy alternatively activated macrophages potentially exert atheroprotective effects."

In clinical trials, ixmyelocel-T has shown promise in the treatment of severe, chronic ischemic and inflammatory diseases associated with atherosclerosis. Ixmyelocel-T therapy is an investigational, patient-specific, multicellular therapy expanded from a patient's own bone marrow and comprised primarily of $CD90^+$ mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs) and $CD14^+$autofluorescent$^+$ alternatively activated macrophages. These macrophages have been identified by the secretion of anti-inflammatory cytokines, expression of scavenger receptors and the upregulation of reverse cholesterol transporter proteins. This study represents the first report of expansion of this cell type in vitro.

Advanced atherosclerotic disease and its associated arterial lesions (atheroma) are characterized by lipid accumulation, chronic inflammation and defective removal of apoptotic cells. In this in vitro study, alternatively activated macrophages in ixmyelocel-T demonstrated key functions in the resolution of atherosclerotic lesions: active removal of apoptotic cells and reverse cholesterol transport.

Aastrom scientists are currently evaluating the characteristics and therapeutic potential of alternatively activated macrophages, which are a cell population unique to Aastrom's patented cellular therapy.

About Aastrom Biosciences

Aastrom Biosciences is the leader in developing patient-specific, expanded multicellular therapies for use in the treatment of patients with severe, chronic cardiovascular diseases. The company's proprietary cell-processing technology enables the manufacture of ixmyelocel-T, a patient-specific multicellular therapy expanded from a patient's own bone marrow and delivered directly to damaged tissues. Aastrom has advanced ixmyelocel-T into late-stage clinical development, including a Phase 3 clinical program to study patients with critical limb ischemia and a planned Phase 2b clinical trial in patients with ischemic dilated cardiomyopathy. For more information, please visit Aastrom's website at www.aastrom.com. For more information on the pivotal REVIVE Phase 3 clinical trial, please visit the trial website at www.revivecli.com.

The Aastrom Biosciences, Inc. logo is available at http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=3663

This document contains forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements concerning clinical trial plans and progress, objectives and expectations, clinical activity timing, intended product development, the performance and contribution of certain individuals and expected timing of collecting and analyzing treatment data, all of which involve certain risks and uncertainties. These statements are often, but are not always, made through the use of words or phrases such as "anticipates," "intends," "estimates," "plans," "expects," "we believe," "we intend," and similar words or phrases, or future or conditional verbs such as "will," "would," "should," "potential," "could," "may," or similar expressions. Actual results may differ significantly from the expectations contained in the forward-looking statements. Among the factors that may result in differences are the inherent uncertainties associated with clinical trial and product development activities, regulatory approval requirements, competitive developments, and the availability of resources and the allocation of resources among different potential uses. These and other significant factors are discussed in greater detail in Aastrom's Annual or Transition Report on Form 10-K or 10-K/T, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These forward-looking statements reflect management's current views and Aastrom does not undertake to update any of these forward-looking statements to reflect a change in its views or events or circumstances that occur after the date of this release except as required by law.

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