

EpiVario Awarded NIH Grant to Advance Research in Treatments for Cocaine Use Disorder

Company to receive \$295,000 in research funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse

PHILADELPHIA, PA, USA, June 11, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [EpiVario, Inc.](#), a biotech company at the forefront of developing novel therapeutics for memory-related psychiatric disorders, today announced it has been awarded a grant of about \$295,000 from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). This grant will advance research on EpiVario's proprietary small molecule inhibitors designed to reduce cocaine craving and prevent relapse for those addicted to cocaine.

Cocaine Use Disorder (CUD) is characterized by the inability to stop or control cocaine use despite clinically significant impairment, distress, or other adverse consequences. In the United States alone, approximately 2.2 million people use cocaine regularly, with 1.5 million meeting the criteria for CUD as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders. Despite these figures, there are no FDA-approved pharmacological treatments for CUD.

EpiVario has discovered an epigenetic approach to treating CUD by regulating neuronal plasticity to attenuate unwanted cocaine-related learning. The metabolic enzyme acetyl CoA synthetase-2 (ACSS2) generates acetyl-CoA, which we found to be key to building cocaine-related memories. Utilizing this epigenetic approach, EpiVario is developing an acute treatment that can reduce triggered responses and help prevent relapse in CUD patients.

This Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I grant will allow EpiVario to evaluate its portfolio of ACSS2 inhibitors in animal models. Positive results from this study will allow the



company to move forward with its plans to file an Investigative New Drug (IND) application with the FDA.

"This award marks a significant milestone for both our company and the millions affected by cocaine addiction worldwide," said Thomas Kim, President & CEO of EpiVario. "We are one step closer to addressing the urgent need for a reliable and safe CUD pharmacotherapy with minimal side effects."

ABOUT EPIVARIO

EpiVario is pioneering novel epigenetic therapeutics for the treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders. Spun out of the Epigenetics Institute of The University of Pennsylvania, the company is developing pharmacotherapeutics that target a newly discovered epigenetic process in long-term memory formation. By targeting this activity to modulate stress and drug-related memories, EpiVario is establishing a novel, differentiated, and promising approach to address substance use disorders and PTSD.

For further information, please visit epivario.com. Follow EpiVario on Twitter at @EpiVario and on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/epivario

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