

ASX/Media Release

Benitec appoints Dr Peter French as CEO

15 June 2010, Melbourne, Australia: The Directors of Benitec Limited (ASX:BLT) are pleased to announce that Dr Peter French has been appointed CEO of Benitec, effective immediately. Dr French has been Benitec's Chief Scientific Officer since August 2009.

In making this appointment, the Board recognises Dr French's extensive experience in medical research and development spanning 33 years in cell and molecular biology and biotechnology. The Board is looking to Dr French to build upon the strong foundations laid by the former CEO, Ms Sue MacLeman, in expanding and strengthening Benitec's R&D and intellectual property portfolio.

As Benitec's Chief Scientific Officer, Dr French has been extensively involved in managing and leading Benitec's three key R&D programs - the HIV/AIDS clinical program at the City of Hope Medical Center in the USA; the Hepatitis B program with Biomix Biotechnologies in China; and the lung cancer programme at the University of New South Wales. Furthermore, he has successfully managed the extensive intellectual property portfolio owned and licensed by Benitec.

Peter French is a cell and molecular biologist who has been extensively involved in both basic and clinical medical research and commercialisation of biological intellectual property. He has an MBA in Technology Management and a PhD in cell biology. Dr French is a Past President of the Australia and New Zealand Society for Cell and Developmental Biology, and represented Australia's biological scientists on the Board of FASTS, Australia's peak government lobbying organization for science and technology. Dr French has conducted cell and molecular research in a broad range of areas relevant to Benitec's DNA-directed RNAi based therapeutic technology, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, neurobiology, immunology and inflammatory disease.

He obtained his PhD in 1987 for work performed at CSIRO on the characterisation of the keratin composition of the developing wool fibre. He carried out postdoctoral research at the Children's Medical Research Foundation, Sydney, on the role of glycoprotein expression in neuronal development. In 1989 he became Principal Scientific Officer and Manager of the Centre for Immunology, St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney. Over the past 10 years Dr French has been extensively involved in Australia's biotechnology industry, initially founding the stem cell storage company Cryosite (ASX:CTE), and then taking up leadership roles at Probiomix Ltd where he oversaw the commercialisation of an immune modulating probiotic to the local and international pharmacy market, and at Fermiscan Ltd where he oversaw several clinical trials of the use of X-ray diffraction of hair to detect the presence of breast cancer.

The Chairman of Benitec, Mr Peter Francis, said, "The Board is very pleased that Dr French has accepted the role of CEO. I look forward to working closely with him as he leads Benitec to the next stage in its development. The Board and Peter form a formidable leadership team to position Benitec for success."

Mr Mel Bridges echoed Mr Francis' words. "I have had the opportunity to have worked closely with Dr French over the past few months and I look forward to Benitec continuing to move forward under Peter's leadership."

BENITEC LIMITED:

Mel Bridges
Executive Director
+61 (0)413 051 600
mbridges@benitec.com

Peter French
Chief Executive Officer
+61 (0)412 457 595
pfrench@benitec.com

About Benitec

Benitec is an Australian biotechnology company focused on licensing its extensive intellectual property portfolio and developing therapeutics to treat serious diseases using its proprietary ddRNAi technology. For additional information, please visit www.benitec.com.