



Santen and Singapore's Health-tech Start-up, Plano Form a Strategic Alliance to Tackle the Global Burden of Myopia

June 30, 2020, Osaka, Japan and Singapore -- Santen Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (hereinafter, Santen) and Plano Pte. Ltd (hereinafter, Plano) today announced a strategic alliance to tackle the global burden of myopia. Under this strategic alliance, Plano has secured an investment from Santen. Santen, through Plano, will initiate to tackle the burden of myopia using both a holistic approach and innovative technological solutions.

Santen, as a leading company in the field of ophthalmology, has cultivated expertise and capabilities specializing in ophthalmology based on a thorough customer orientation, including patients and healthcare professionals. In recent years, we have focused our attention on medical devices and digital technologies, and have continued to take on the challenge of contributing to the health of the eyes of people around the world through activities that meet the needs of customers in each region, as well as offering products and solutions that cover a wide range of disease fields.

Plano is an eye health tech company launched in 2017, founded by Associate Professor Mohamed Dirani. It is the first spin-off from the Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI) - Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC) Ophthalmic Technologies Incubator Programme, dedicated to accelerating highly promising ophthalmic R&D projects towards commercialisation and medical deployment. The key products in the company's ecosystem include the plano application and the online optometry booking system, Plano Eyecheck. The science-based plano application has been adopted by more than 250,000 households. In less than 3 years, Plano is considered as one of the world leaders in raising awareness and educating the public on the prevention, detection and risk factors of myopia.

Myopia is one of the most common health problems in the world, affecting an estimated 2 billion people, or about 28% of the world's population. The number of people with myopia is expected to increase to 5 billion by the year 2050, which will be half of the world's population¹. Myopia affects people of every age, gender and race in every country. However, some countries have been affected more than others. Developed countries in East and Southeast Asia have the highest rates of myopia in the world. As many as 80-90% of teenagers and young adults in Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and 96.5% of 19-year-old men in South Korea have myopia². Just 60 years ago, only 10-20% of people in China had myopia³. Myopia has also become more common in Europe, and the United States where it now affects up to 40% of people⁴. Treating myopia costs Asian economies US\$328 billion every year⁵, with Singapore alone

spending US\$755 million annually⁶.

Shigeo Taniuchi, President and CEO of Santen said "I am pleased to have a strategic alliance with Plano. Santen will, through Plano, by this strategic alliance, initiate in Singapore to raise awareness and support prevention and management of myopia in everyday life, as well as to expand the novel solutions to the region and beyond. With a recognition of rapid increase of myopia as a social issue, as a global leader in ophthalmology, Santen will work closely with Plano to resolve social issues related to myopia and to improve QOL of the patients around the world."

"This funding and strategic alliance with Santen will play an instrumental role in growing Plano's user engagement, strengthen its big data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities, and drive its international expansion plans. The strategic alliance with Santen, who recognize myopia as a material issue, is very important as we collectively embark on our future objectives to advance Plano's products and services, expand its myopia-centered ecosystem into the region and introduce new and people-centered products for the management of myopia. We are eager to get to work with the excellent team at Santen," said Plano's Managing Director Associate Professor Mohamed Dirani. "To align with Santen, who have shown leadership in ophthalmic care for over 130 years, is a humbling one. This alliance will provide the team at Plano with the added confidence, mentorship, and new opportunities to more effectively deliver its pioneering services in Singapore and the region. I am honored to be part of this journey and believe that this alliance will take Plano to even greater heights."

Professor Wong Tien Yin, Medical Director of the Singapore National Eye Centre said "Myopia is a major public health problem in Asia and globally. We need to continue to raise awareness of the impact of the disease, its major risk factors and how we can slow its progression to prevent visual impairment. In children, a combination of increasing opportunities for outdoor activities and reducing excessive near-work activities are important strategies. We are very happy to see this strategic alliance being created between Plano, a startup company which was created within SERI/SNEC's incubator framework and Santen, a leading ophthalmic company with whom we have been working for several years on a broad strategic research and development collaboration. Plano's growth is a testament to the ability of Singapore's clinical centers to create internationally competitive and successful startups."

Plano users can look forward to a series of exciting announcements which include a new app interface for both parents and children, improved product functionality, and for the first time in the world, an AI-driven calculator for the development, progression and stabilization of myopia in children and teenagers.

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2. Dolin E. The myopia boom. *Nature*. 2015;519(7543):276-8.
3. Morgan IG, French AN, Ashby RS, Guo X, Ding X, He M, et al. The epidemics of myopia: Aetiology and prevention. *Progress in Retinal & Eye Research*. 2017.
4. Vitale S, Sperduto RD, Ferris FL, 3rd. Increased prevalence of myopia in the United States between 1971- 1972 and 1999-2004. *Arch Ophthalmol*. 2009;127(12):1632-9.
5. World Health Organization. The impact of myopia and high myopia: Report of the Joint World Health Organization - Brien Holden Vision Institute Global Scientific Meeting on Myopia. University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia: 2015.
6. Zheng YF, Pan CW, Chay J, Wong TY, Finkelstein E, Saw SM. The economic cost of myopia in adults aged over 40 years in Singapore. *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*. 2013;54(12):7532-7.

About Santen

As a specialized company dedicated to ophthalmology, Santen carries out research, development, marketing, and sales of pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter products, and medical devices. Santen is the market leader for prescription ophthalmic pharmaceuticals in Japan and its products now reach patients in over 60 countries. With scientific knowledge and organizational capabilities nurtured over a nearly 130-year history, Santen provides products and services to contribute to the well-being of patients, their loved ones and consequently to society. For more information, please visit Santen's website (www.santen.com).

About Plano

Plano was developed with a clear purpose; to save sight and empower lives. With a culture of disruptive thinking grounded in real scientific research, Plano promotes the use of innovative technology to provide a solution to help mitigate the public health, societal and economic issues posed by excessive device usage. Plano's founding Managing Director, Associate Professor Mohamed Dirani, has dedicated his life to the study and research of myopia, and is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Duke-NUS Medical School and an Honorary Principal Investigator at the Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI) and the Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA). www.plano.co

Santen Forward-looking Statements

Information provided in this press release contains forward-looking statements. The achievement of these forecasts is subject to risk and uncertainty from various sources. Therefore, please note that the actual results may differ significantly from the forecasts. Business performance and financial conditions are subject to the effects of changes in regulations made by the governments of Japan and other nations concerning medical insurance, drug pricing and other systems, and to fluctuations in market variables such as interest rates and foreign exchange rates.

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