

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **PsychoGenics and SMA Foundation Extend Research Agreement**

**PsychoGenics and the Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Foundation extend research agreement to profile putative therapeutics for SMA.**

February 24, 2006 – PsychoGenics Inc. Tarrytown, New York and the Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Foundation have extended their research agreement to establish and behaviorally phenotype transgenic in vivo models of SMA and test potential therapeutics using these models.

As part of this collaborative agreement PsychoGenics has established self-sustaining transgenic SMA colonies and characterized the progression of behavioral and motor deficits in these mice over time. A rapid throughput battery of discriminatory tests has been developed to evaluate candidate drugs and therapies in these models to treat spinal muscular atrophy.

“We are very pleased about extending this research agreement that utilizes our scientific and behavioral expertise to facilitate the discovery of new drugs and treatments for SMA,” said Dr Emer Leahy, PsychoGenics President and CEO.

SMA is the most common genetic cause of death among infants and toddlers. It is characterized by the wasting of skeletal muscles and caused by progressive degeneration of nerve cells in the spinal cord; the disease leads to increasing muscular weakness, atrophy and premature death due to respiratory problems. The SMA Foundation estimates that there are currently over 50,000 people suffering from SMA in the United States, Europe, and Japan and that the market potential for a drug to treat SMA ranges from \$500 million to \$1 billion dollars annually.

“This agreement fills a gap in community resources and represents an important step forward in therapeutics development for SMA and presents an encouraging opportunity for companies wishing to evaluate their compounds of interest.” noted the Foundation Executive Director Cynthia Joyce.

#### **About the Spinal Muscular Atrophy Foundation:**

The SMA Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded in 2003 that is dedicated to finding a treatment and potential cure for Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA). The Foundation provides funding for the full range of research from basic to clinical work conducted in academic laboratories as well as corporate therapeutics development. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded nearly \$30 million in sponsored research agreements. In addition, the Foundation is committed to raising awareness and generating support for increased federal and corporate funding for the disease.

For more information on the Spinal Muscular Atrophy Foundation, contact:

Cynthia Joyce

Executive Director

(646) 253-7100

[cjoyce@smafoundation.org](mailto:cjoyce@smafoundation.org)

or visit [www.smafoundation.org](http://www.smafoundation.org)

**About PsychoGenics:**

PsychoGenics is a leader in preclinical behavioral neurobiology and a provider of customized and innovative solutions for central nervous system drug discovery. PsychoGenics works with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, academic institutions and not-for-profit research foundations to address such major neurological disorders as: ALS, Huntington's Disease, anxiety, cognitive impairment, depression, psychosis/schizophrenia and SMA. PsychoGenics supports the understanding and treatment of CNS disorders by offering an extensive range of established and customized solutions, including validated in vivo behavioral tests, genotyping, behavioral pharmacology, phenotyping, neuromorphology, bioinformatics, microdialysis and radiotelemetry.

*For more information on PsychoGenics Inc. and its services contact:*

*David Pushett, Ph.D.*

*VP Business Development*

*Ph: (914) 593 0640*

*[david.pushett@psychogenics.com](mailto:david.pushett@psychogenics.com)*

or visit [www.psychogenics.com](http://www.psychogenics.com)