



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Vancouver-based Acuitas Therapeutics Makes History with First COVID-19 Vaccine Approved for Use in Canada**

**Vancouver, B.C.** – A Canadian biotechnology company has made history with the announcement of the BioNTech/Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine receiving approval for use in Canada (<https://bit.ly/39SLwO9>). Vancouver-based Acuitas Therapeutics provided their lipid nanoparticle delivery system – a key element – in the development of this vaccine.

In November, BioNTech and Pfizer announced positive efficacy data from their Phase 3 COVID-19 trial results (<https://bit.ly/2JSTR9I>) that showed that their vaccine was 95% effective in preventing COVID-19 and showed no serious safety concerns. Phase 3 of the trial encompassed testing the vaccine for safety and efficacy in 43,661 people around the world who enrolled in the study.

Acuitas Therapeutics has earned a global reputation for their work in developing lipid nanoparticles (LNP) – tiny “delivery vehicles” that protect the messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine after it is injected. Acuitas’ proprietary LNP carries the mRNA, protecting it after administration and delivering it into our cells, placing it exactly where it needs to be. The Acuitas LNP delivery system is a key component of mRNA vaccines and is being used in several COVID-19 vaccines currently being developed, including the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine.

“It is humbling to realize that Acuitas Therapeutics played a role in bringing the world to this moment – where a COVID-19 vaccine has received Emergency Use Authorization. Since February 2020, every single person at Acuitas has dedicated themselves to the development of COVID-19 vaccines to fight this deadly and devastating virus – working nights and weekends, missing important personal events and, I can confirm, losing a lot of sleep. I am very proud of what we have accomplished as a team and in partnership with BioNTech and their partner Pfizer,” said Acuitas Therapeutics President & CEO, Dr. Thomas Madden. “This authorization means that the vaccine can be distributed and people can start to be vaccinated to protect them against COVID-19. It is, we hope, the beginning of the end of this pandemic. It gives us light at the end of what has been – on a global level – a very dark tunnel.” He added: “The quality of the data from BioNTech/Pfizer’s large trial speaks to the efficacy and safety of this vaccine and that is important for people to know. What we need now are for people to get vaccinated so that we can eradicate



COVID-19, a horrific virus that has taken more than 1.5 million lives worldwide and has devastated families and communities in every corner of the globe.”

Added to this positive news is a key point that Dr. Madden wants people to understand: The race for a vaccine by multiple companies is supportive and collaborative rather than competitive. He explains: “This is a global pandemic and that means that billions of vaccine doses are required – and there is the need for many companies to participate in the development and distribution of the vaccines.” He added: “The more companies that are developing vaccines and sharing information on the safety and efficacy, the better it is. The more companies that produce a vaccine that is reviewed and then receives approval, the quicker that people can get vaccinated. It’s important that people realize the spirit in which the biotechnology/pharmaceutical community is approaching this crucial task, and that is with innovative science and with a commitment to work together to benefit society on a global level. We are proud to be a part of this industry and to be contributing our part to several vaccine candidates to help the world eradicate this horrific virus.”

### **About Acuitas Therapeutics**

Founded in February 2009, Vancouver-based Acuitas Therapeutics ([www.acuitastx.com](http://www.acuitastx.com)) is a private biotechnology company that specializes in the development of delivery systems for nucleic acid therapeutics based on lipid nanoparticles. The company partners with pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology organizations and academic institutes to advance nucleic acid therapeutics to the clinical trial phase and to the marketplace. The team works with partners to develop new therapies to address unmet clinical needs based on its internationally recognized capabilities in delivery technology. Acuitas Therapeutics has agreements in place for their proprietary lipid nanotechnology to be used in the development of several COVID-19 vaccines. Other collaborators include CureVac, which has published Phase 1 clinical studies data (<https://bit.ly/3kixneF>) and is in a Phase 2a study, and Imperial College London, which is currently in Phase 1/2 clinical trials.

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