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Sanofi and its subsidiary Genzyme have announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement with AstraZeneca to acquire Caprelsa (vandetanib), a rare disease therapy, indicated for the treatment of symptomatic or progressive medullary thyroid carcinoma in patients with unresectable locally advanced or metastatic disease.

Caprelsa is an oral kinase inhibitor treatment and is currently available in 28 countries. Caprelsa is in Phase III development for differentiated thyroid carcinoma, with the study expected to finish in the second half of 2015.

"The addition of Caprelsa represents a strong strategic fit for our rare Endocrinology portfolio and underscores Genzyme's commitment to addressing unmet needs in the thyroid community. We look forward to bringing our rare disease expertise to appropriate patients with advanced stage thyroid carcinoma," said Dr David Meeker, president and CEO, Genzyme.

The acquisition builds on Genzyme's long-standing commitment and scientific leadership in the field of endocrinology globally. Under the terms of the agreement, Genzyme will pay AstraZeneca up to \$300 million, including an upfront payment of \$165 million to acquire the global rights to sell and further develop Caprelsa, and further development and sales milestone payments of up to \$135 million. The transaction does not include the transfer of any AstraZeneca employees or facilities.

Mr Luke Miels, executive vice-president, global product and portfolio strategy and corporate affairs, AstraZeneca, said, "Caprelsa is a rare disease therapy and the divestment to Genzyme, an expert leader in endocrinology, demonstrates our commitment to ensure patients continue to have access to this medicine while we sharpen our focus on key disease areas."

The transaction is subject to closing conditions, including the receipt of antitrust clearance from the US Federal Trade Commission. The transaction is expected to complete in the second half of 2015.