Almirall supports European post-graduate clinical research into MS spasticity with two annual grants

- **Grants are to promote post-graduate clinical research projects in the field of multiple sclerosis spasticity (MSS)**

- **Winning projects will examine the effectiveness of physiotherapy via videoconference for MSS patients and evaluate the efficacy of a new endocannabinoid modulator medicine on gait parameters, fatigue and health resources**

- **Results are expected to be published by Q2 2013**

Barcelona, 29th February 2012: During its offical awards ceremony at company headquarters in Barcelona, Almirall S.A. (ALM.MC) announced its MS Spasticity Research Grants for 2012 had been awarded to Dr. Thorsten Schultheiß from Germany and Mrs. María Carmen Molina Díaz from Spain.

The first winning project is an open prospective study proposed by Dr. Thorsten Schultheiß, member of the Neurology Department at Dresden University Hospital, Germany. It focuses on healthcare and healtheconomic aspects in the treatment of MSS patients with Sativex®, (the endocannabinoid system modulator recently approved). Specifically, the project will examine the efficacy of Sativex® on gait parameters and will also evaluate the treatment's effect on fatigue and depression.

The second awarded project was put forward by Mrs. María Carmen Molina Díaz, from the Rehabilitation Department, Hospital Universitario Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, and it aims to assess whether MSS patients who follow their physiotherapy exercise programme via videoconference will have a greater compliance to the prescribed exercises, as well as improved quality of life versus those who are asked to perform exercises at home without this support.

Professor Xavier Montalbán, member of the jury, said: "*Spasticity is one of the most recalcitrant symptoms in patients with multiple sclerosis and it has been reported to be present in more than 80% of cases, in whom 1/3 rated it as a moderate or worse. More effective management is required.*"

While another member of the jury, Prof Hartung, remarked: *"We are seeing some significant advances in the longer term treatment of MS which is reflected in increased longevity and decreased mortality. With patients living longer, management of symptoms will become more and more important. Undoubtedly, spasticity is one of the most important symptoms in this regard, and any research in this area is an important step forward."*

About the Research Grant Programme
The MS Spasticity Research Educational Grant Program, now in its second year, was set up by pharmaceutical company Almirall, to support healthcare professionals undertaking research in the field of multiple sclerosis spasticity (MSS), and awards funding to the value of €24,000 per project annually to two relevant research projects. The winning projects will be developed in 2012, with investigators aiming to publish results during Q2 2013.

The 2012 program was opened for submissions in June last year and the program was also presented at ECTRIMS congress (European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis) in October 2011, with the result that over 20 proposals had been received by December 2011. An independent selection board, comprised of Professor Montalbán, from the Clinical Neuroimmunology Unit, Vall d'Hebron University Hospital, Barcelona, Spain, and Professor H.P. Hartung, Chair of Neurology at Heinrich-Heine University, Düsseldorf reviewed and ranked the proposals with support from Almirall's Global Medical Affairs Department, however final decisions were made by Profs. Hartung and Montalbán.*

Almirall will continue to support this initiative this year as part of its ongoing commitment to research in the field of MSS, with submissions opening in June 2012.

*Note: Board members reviewed all applications in a blind setting and were not informed of the origin of applications.

Enquiries:
Emanate - Fiona Gildea
+44 (0)20 7611 3881
fiona.gildea@emanatepr.com

Notes to Editors
About the Almirall in MS Spasticity Research Educational Grant Program
The MS Spasticity Research Grant was set up by Almirall with the aim of fostering clinical research in the area of multiple sclerosis spasticity across Europe while supporting post-graduate educational processes. Funding is open to post-graduate MS healthcare professionals (neurologists, rehabilitators, physiotherapists and nurses) undertaking clinical research projects in the areas of MS spasticity epidemiology, diagnosis or management. The grant program does not constitute an incentive to recommend, prescribe, purchase, supply, sell or administer specific drugs.

About MS spasticity
There are approximately 500,000 people suffering of MS in the top five EU markets.[i] Spasticity is a symptom defined by patients and carers as muscle spasms, stiffness, rigidity and/or difficulty to move, and is one of the most common symptoms of MS, occurring in as many as 75% of people

with MS. Spasticity can affect many aspects of MS patients' daily life, and is a major contributor to their distress and disability.[ii]

About Almirall

Almirall is an international pharmaceutical company based on innovation and committed to health. Headquartered in Barcelona, Spain, it researches, develops, manufactures and commercialises its own R&D and licensed drugs with the aim of improving people's health and wellbeing.

Almirall focuses its research resources on therapeutic areas related to the treatment of asthma, COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis and other dermatological conditions.

Almirall's products are currently present in over 70 countries while it has direct presence in Europe and Latin America through 12 affiliates.

For further information please visit the website at: www.almirall.com

---

[i] Multiple Sclerosis International Federation. European map of ms database. ©2010 EMSP, MSIF, www.europeanmapofms.org. Top five EU countries include: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and UK.

[ii] Rizzo MA Hadjimichael OC, Preiningerova J, *et al.* Prevalence and treatment of spasticity reported by multiple sclerosis patients. *Mult Scler* 2004; 10:589-595.