



Helsingborg, Sweden, January 7, 2020

**CEO's New Year Letter 2020:**

**New decade begins with increased focus on life science**

**Just before the holidays, the Swedish government published its new life science strategy. It describes eight prioritized areas that will strengthen the industry and contribute to Sweden's continued prosperity. Sweden has a long and proud tradition in life science and I would like us to foster an environment that is even better to ensure that this continues to be the case, for which reason I am pleased to see this initiative.**

Innovation is and has been a strength with which I believe that we as a country are often associated. Of course, powerful innovation is crucial in our cutting-edge high-tech industry, but it is not enough. Stronger competitiveness and increased collaboration are also essential. In particular, I am thinking about the future for my 42,000 colleagues scattered around at the approximately 3,000 life science companies in Sweden. We want there to be more and we want to build stronger and bigger companies. We are all active on an international playing field, for which reason Agenda 2030 has been a given for us for some time if we are to be competitive and work for a sustainable future. What can Sweden do to strengthen and refine its competitiveness? Innovation and good collaboration within the country – and preferably throughout the Nordic region – are two excellent components, but more is required to bring additional skills and investments to Sweden. It is extremely important that we continue to strengthen health care so that we can become an attractive country for conducting high-quality clinical studies and for securing and expanding valuable biobanks and data registries. The use of multidisciplinary technical solutions in prevention and care is another excellent focus for Swedish life science, where our knowledge and innovative talent in digital technology are important competitive advantages.

I would also like to see us take major steps in traditional drug development over the next decade in order to streamline development and to ensure that we will have tomorrow's medicines at a reasonable cost. Currently it takes an average of four years to progress from idea to a new drug candidate, followed by an average of ten more years of preclinical and clinical research before a new drug reaches the patient.

This process has been largely the same over the past 20 years. Although costs per project have not gone down, but rather have risen, the development process has become somewhat more efficient. By combining experience, "big data" and artificial intelligence, I believe that we can become even more efficient. There is a demand for new and better assistive devices that can improve our efficiency and help us to make disciplined decisions about which projects to fund and when to close them. While the actors in this area who own large amounts of data are admittedly ahead, the Swedish life science sector is likely to be early in implementing and demonstrating both societal benefit and success for small and medium-sized biotech companies.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with innovation and new technology together with talented colleagues, both within and outside Aqilion, all of whom contribute cutting-edge knowledge, experience and the courage to think innovatively. It is a privilege for me personally. But it is also the future for Aqilion in our aspiration to create value for our customers and owners by successfully contributing to the development of future medications for patients.

I would like to wish you all an exciting life science year in 2020!

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