



Draig Therapeutics

## Draig Therapeutics Launches with \$140 Million (£107 Million) Total Investment to Advance its Portfolio of Next-Generation Therapies for Major Neuropsychiatric Disorders

- Clinical-stage company led by world-class team targeting core neurotransmission pathways underlying neuropsychiatric disorders with a rich pipeline of novel, potentially transformative treatments
- Proceeds will fund four clinical studies: two related to the Phase 2-stage lead candidate, DT-101, in Major Depressive Disorder and two in additional programmes
- Outstanding syndicate of Series A investors led by Access Biotechnology join seed investors SV Health Investors and ICG

**Cardiff, United Kingdom – 18 June 2025** – Draig Therapeutics (“Draig”), a clinical-stage company aiming to transform the treatment of neuropsychiatric diseases, today launches from stealth having raised a total of \$140 million (£107 million) in the last nine months. The oversubscribed Series A financing was led by Access Biotechnology, with participation from Canaan Partners, SR One, Sanofi Ventures, Schrodgers Capital along with seed investors SV Health Investors, which co-founded the company, and ICG.

“Despite numerous treatments available for neuropsychiatric disorders, a significant unmet need remains with many patients continuing to experience inadequate symptom relief and high rates of relapse,” said **Liam Ratcliffe, Head of Access Biotechnology**. “Draig’s differentiated approach, which targets core mechanisms underlying these complex conditions, has the potential to deliver a real breakthrough for patients.”

Draig was formed through a partnership between Cardiff University’s Medicines Discovery Institute and SV Health Investors and launched in 2024. SV Health Investors and ICG provided initial seed funding and built the company.

The unique scientific expertise of Professors John Atack and Simon Ward in safely and effectively modulating the core glutamate and GABA pathways in the brain underpins Draig’s pipeline of novel drug candidates. Both founders are Directors of the Medicines Discovery Institute (MDI) at Cardiff University and have attracted a world-class leadership team of highly experienced industry experts and proven company builders with strong track records of driving innovation and developing transformative therapies into Draig.

“Making the best molecules to rebalance brain networks has been John and Simon’s life work. It has been a professional highlight for me to be part of creating this hugely promising company too,” said **Ruth McKernan, Operating Partner at SV Health Investors, Co-Founder and Executive Chair of Draig**.

“From the outset, we were drawn to Draig’s bold scientific vision and the founding team’s deep expertise in unlocking high value but previously difficult-to-drug targets in neuropsychiatric



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disorders,” said **Charles Dunn, Principal at SV Health Investors**. “Built around an exciting clinical-stage asset, Draig is a perfect example of SV’s strategy to create and build world-class companies around innovative science to deliver high-impact drugs to patients and address major unmet needs.”

The new funds will enable Draig to advance its lead candidate DT-101, a next-generation AMPA receptor positive allosteric modulator (PAM), into Phase 2 trials for Major Depressive Disorder in 2025. DT-101 was designed to allow effective modulation of the AMPA receptor without compromising safety. This was borne out in data from a well-tolerated Phase 1a programme in over 60 subjects, which clearly demonstrated target engagement using the novel technique of magnetoencephalography and will be presented at an upcoming scientific meeting.

“With several exciting candidates in our pipeline, including our promising clinical candidate DT-101 for Major Depressive Disorder, alongside the support of an exceptional investor syndicate and a world-class team, Draig has a great platform from which to make a positive impact on the treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders,” said **Samantha Budd Haeberlein, Venture Partner at ICG and former Chief Medical Officer of Draig**.

The funding will also enable Draig to advance two highly selective GABA<sub>A</sub> receptor modulators towards clinical development in 2026, with best-in-class potential across a range of prevalent and underserved neuropsychiatric disorders.

The founding team of Prof. John Atack (Chief Translational Officer), Prof. Simon Ward (Chief Scientific Officer) and Ruth McKernan CBE (Executive Chair) has extensive experience in company creation and central nervous system drug development. Draig is now an established international company whose executive team brings deep biotech and pharma experience, and includes Inder Kaul MD (Chief Medical Officer, formerly at Bristol Myers Squibb and Karuna Therapeutics), Florian Islinger MD (Chief Commercial Strategy Officer, formerly at Roche) and David Watson (Chief Operating Officer, formerly at Biogen).

More details on members of the Board of Directors and the Scientific Advisory Board can be found on the Draig website at [www.draigtherapeutics.com](http://www.draigtherapeutics.com)

### ENDS

#### For further information:

Mark Swallow, Sandi Greenwood  
E-mail: [draigtx@medistrava.com](mailto:draigtx@medistrava.com)

Draig Therapeutics  
E-mail: [rmckernan@draigtherapeutics.com](mailto:rmckernan@draigtherapeutics.com)



## Draig Therapeutics

### **About Draig Therapeutics**

Draig Therapeutics is a clinical-stage company with a mission to transform treatments in Neuropsychiatry. The company is leveraging its founders' unique scientific expertise in modulating the core glutamate / GABA pathways that play a critical role in neuropsychiatric diseases to advance a pipeline of groundbreaking therapies designed to address large unmet patient needs, including in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD).

Draig is the Welsh word for 'dragon' and it reflects the company's origins in Wales. The name and logo were inspired by this heritage, reflecting its scientific roots stemming from Cardiff University.

Draig was co-founded by Cardiff University and SV Health Investors, which led the seed financing with ICG, and is backed by other leading healthcare venture firms including Access Biotechnology, Canaan Partners, SR One, Sanofi Ventures and Schroders Capital. For more information, please visit [www.draigtherapeutics.com](http://www.draigtherapeutics.com)

### **About Access Biotechnology**

Access Biotechnology is the life science investment arm of Access Industries, and invests in transformative therapies for conditions with high unmet needs and that have the potential to meaningfully impact human health. [www.accessindustries.com/biotechnology](http://www.accessindustries.com/biotechnology)

### **About Access Industries**

Access Industries is a privately held global investment firm founded in 1986 by businessman and philanthropist Len Blavatnik. Access identifies companies with strong business models and management teams, and optimizes their value through financial backing and expertise. Access currently manages more than \$35 billion in perpetual, flexible capital, guided by a team of investment professionals. The portfolio includes substantial investments across biotechnology, entertainment, global media, real estate, technology, and other sectors.

[www.accessindustries.com](http://www.accessindustries.com)

### **About SV Health Investors**

SV Health Investors is a leading healthcare fund manager committed to investing in tomorrow's healthcare breakthroughs. The SV funds invest across stages, geographic regions, and sectors, with expertise spanning biotechnology, dementia, medical devices, healthcare growth and healthcare technology. With approximately \$2bn in assets under management and a truly transatlantic presence with offices in London and Boston, SV has built an extensive network of talented investment professionals and experienced industry veterans. Since its founding in 1993, SV has invested in, created and built more than 200 companies attracting global talent, entrepreneurs and pharma partners. To date, these investments have resulted in the licensing of 27 novel drugs and six new drug classes able to treat indications with unmet medical needs and deliver positive impact to patients. For more information, please visit [www.svhealthinvestors.com](http://www.svhealthinvestors.com).



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### **About ICG**

ICG (LSE: ICG) is a global alternative asset manager with \$112bn\* in AUM and more than three decades of experience generating attractive returns. We operate from over 20 locations globally and invest our clients' capital across Structured Capital; Private Equity Secondaries; Private Debt; Credit; and Real Assets. Our exceptional people originate differentiated opportunities, invest responsibly, and deliver long-term value. We partner with management teams, founders, and business owners in a creative and solutions-focused approach, supporting them with our expertise and flexible capital. For more information visit our website and follow us on LinkedIn.

\*As at 31 March 2025.

**For more information about our other investors, please see the following websites:**

[Canaan Partners](#)

[SR One](#)

[Sanofi Ventures](#)

[Schroders Capital](#)