



## **Silence Therapeutics plc**

### **Holding in Company**

**London 15 January 2009** – Silence Therapeutics plc (the “Company”) announces that it received notification yesterday that, following an acquisition of ordinary shares on Monday 12 January 2009, HBOS plc are now the beneficial owners of 6,691,308 ordinary shares of the Company, representing 5.81% of the Company’s total voting rights.

- Ends -

Enquiries:

For further information, please contact the following:

**Silence Therapeutics plc**

+44(0)20 7307 1620

Iain Ross, Chairman & CEO

Melvyn Davies, Finance Director

**Powerscourt**

+44(0)20 7250 1446

Paul Durman

Kay Larsen

**Nominated Advisers**

**Nomura Code Securities Limited**

+44(0)20 7776 1200

Richard Potts

Notes to Editors:

**About Silence Therapeutics plc ([www.silence-therapeutics.com](http://www.silence-therapeutics.com))**

Silence Therapeutics plc (AIM: SLN) is a leading European RNAi-focused biotechnology company.

RNA interference (RNAi), is a Nobel Prize winning technology and one of the most exciting areas of drug discovery today. It represents a completely new approach to selectively 'silence' or inactivate disease relevant genes and as such it has the potential to create a new class of therapeutic products. RNAi could therefore offer a therapeutic approach to a broad range of diseases (cancer, infectious diseases, inherited diseases), many of which have been regarded as incurable and are not addressed by current therapeutics, therefore providing a large market opportunity.

Silence Therapeutics has developed a platform of novel short interfering RNA ('siRNA') molecules, AtuRNAi, which provide a number of advantages over conventional siRNA molecules, including increased stability against nuclease degradation. In addition, the Company has developed a proprietary systemic delivery system, AtuPLEX. This system enables the functional delivery of siRNA molecules to targeted diseased tissues and cells, while increasing their bioavailability and intracellular uptake.

Following the granting of its patents in Europe, the USA and Australia, Silence Therapeutics is one of only two companies worldwide with a proprietary position on composition of matter for siRNA therapeutics.

Silence's lead internal product, Atu027, is a proprietary AtuRNAi molecule in preclinical development for systemic cancer indications. Atu027 has successfully completed single and repeat dose toxicology and geno-toxicology studies, as well as a 28-day toxicology study using multiple dosing regimens. Silence made a regulatory filing in 2008 and expects to commence clinical trials for Atu027 in 2009.

In March 2008 Silence Therapeutics announced a collaboration with AstraZeneca (LSE: AZN) focused on the development of a range of novel delivery approaches for siRNA molecules. Under the terms of the agreement both Silence Therapeutics and AstraZeneca will be allowed to commercialize the truly novel delivery systems that the two partners develop together.

Silence Therapeutics has granted a licence to AstraZeneca to develop novel AtuRNAi therapeutics against five specific targets. This collaboration was the first industry validation of the potential application of Silence Therapeutics' proprietary AtuRNAi molecules and solidified the Company's leadership position in field of RNAi therapeutics.

The Company's AtuRNAi technology also has been sublicensed to Pfizer via Quark's license to them of the compound RTP-801i-14 for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and a number of other indications. This compound entered a phase II clinical study in July 2008. Silence Therapeutics also has licensed to Quark rights to the AtuRNAi structure for Quark's proprietary compound, AKli-5, which is in a Phase I human clinical study for treatment of acute kidney injury.

### **Forward-Looking Statements**

This press release includes forward-looking statements that are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors. These risks and uncertainties could cause actual results to differ materially from those referred to in the forward-looking statements. All forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to Silence Therapeutics and Silence Therapeutics assumes no obligation to update any such forward-looking statements.

Silence Therapeutics is based in London, UK, and Berlin, Germany, and is listed on AIM.

