



QLT Inc.

887 Great Northern Way  
Vancouver, BC Canada V5T 4T5

t 604.707.7000  
f 604.707.7001  
www.qltinc.com

*news release*

## **QLT UPDATES STATUS OF VISUDYNE<sup>®</sup> THERAPY REIMBURSEMENT IN U.S.**

*CMS Reverses Original National Coverage Policy Decision for Visudyne*

### **For Immediate Release**

**April 1, 2002**

VANCOUVER, CANADA—QLT Inc. (NASDAQ: QLTI; TSE: QLT) announced today that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), posted to its website late Friday afternoon that it has decided not to uphold its original intention to expand the national coverage policy for Visudyne<sup>®</sup> (verteporfin for injection) therapy to include patients with occult subfoveal choroidal neovascularization (CNV) secondary to age-related macular degeneration (AMD)—a leading cause of blindness in people aged 50 and over.

For a full description of the decision, refer to the CMS website link <http://www.hcfa.gov/coverage/8b3-ee7.htm>. QLT encourages comparing this decision with the original Decision Memorandum document posted on October 17, 2001, by CMS regarding their intention to reimburse Visudyne for occult lesions.

“It is very unfortunate that the CMS has reversed its original decision since QLT supports the position of independent physician organizations, particularly those mentioned in the CMS briefing document, that believe Visudyne therapy is the standard of care for patients suffering from occult lesions,” said Paul J. Hastings, President and CEO of QLT. “We believe, particularly after reviewing the CMS document, that all data submitted to CMS continue to support coverage since Visudyne has shown a clinically relevant treatment benefit for patients with occult CNV. We believe the CMS should reconsider its decision.”

This decision is a reversal of the October 17, 2001 Decision Memorandum issued by the CMS to extend reimbursement for patients with the occult form of AMD. The original decision was based on data published in the May 2001 issue of the peer-reviewed *American Journal of Ophthalmology* and was the result of a formal request by the Vitreous Society. On October 29, CMS generated a request for reconsideration of the policy. Since then, QLT and Novartis Ophthalmics have been working cooperatively with the CMS and representatives of the Vitreous Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, and the VIP trial investigators and Data Safety Monitoring Committee to provide all requested additional information to CMS. A series of meetings has occurred between CMS and leading retina experts and QLT believes that no new information was provided to the CMS that should have altered the original Decision Memorandum.

In keeping with our commitment to set and meet achievable financial goals and in consideration of the CMS decision we are resetting expectations for Visudyne sales and refining the range for 2002 sales by reducing the top of the range. We now expect to record sales for Visudyne in 2002 in the range of US\$275 million to \$300 million, which represents approximately 25-35% growth over 2001 sales.

Visudyne is marketed by Novartis Ophthalmics and is commercially available in almost 60 countries for the treatment of predominantly classic subfoveal CNV caused by AMD. It is also approved in over 35 countries, including the EU, U.S. and Canada, for the treatment of subfoveal CNV due to pathologic myopia (severe near-sightedness). In the U.S., Visudyne has received an additional approval for CNV due to presumed ocular histoplasmosis. Visudyne is currently not approved for treatment of the occult form of wet AMD. However based on the peer-reviewed publication of the Phase III trial, Visudyne is currently considered as “standard of care for select patients with occult form of wet AMD” in the guidelines of the Vitreous Society, and the American Academy of Ophthalmology Preferred Practice Pattern.

### **About Visudyne**

Approximately 150,000 patients have undergone Visudyne therapy worldwide. Visudyne is generally well tolerated and has an excellent safety profile. Potential side effects include injection site reactions, headaches, back pain, blurring, decreased sharpness and gaps in vision, and in 1-5% of patients a substantial decrease in vision with partial recovery in some patients. People should avoid direct sunlight for five days to avoid sunburn. People with porphyria should not be treated. For more information, visit [www.visudyne.com](http://www.visudyne.com). Patients are encouraged to call the Visudyne hotline at (800) 821-2450.

- 30 -

QLT Inc.:  
Vancouver, Canada  
Therese Crozier  
Telephone: (604) 707-7000 Fax: (604) 707-7001

Media Contact:  
Tamara Hicks  
Telephone: (604) 788-5144

*Visudyne® is a trade mark of Novartis AG*

QLT Inc. is listed on The Nasdaq Stock Market under the trading symbol “QLTI” and on The Toronto Stock Exchange under the trading symbol “QLT.”

Certain statements in this press release constitute “forward-looking statements” of QLT within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause our actual results to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such statements. Forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, those with respect to anticipated levels of sales of Visudyne® and opportunities to expand the market for Visudyne. These statements are only predictions and actual events or results may differ materially. Factors that could cause such actual events or results expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements to differ materially from any future results express or implied by such statements include, but are not limited to: the risk that future sales of Visudyne may be less than expected, our future operating results are uncertain and likely to fluctuate, currency fluctuations in our primary markets may impact our financial results, uncertainty of and timing of pricing and reimbursement may limit the future sales of Visudyne, the outcome of the pending patent and securities litigation against us may be unfavorable and have an adverse impact on our financial results, we are dependent on third-parties to commercialize Visudyne and other factors described in detail in QLT’s Annual Information Form on Form 10-K, forthcoming quarterly reports on Form 10-Q and other filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Canadian securities regulatory authorities. Forward-looking statements, are based on our current expectations and QLT is not obligated to update such information to reflect later events or developments.