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BATM Advanced Communications Limited
("BATM" or "the Group")

BATM confirms effectiveness of its COVID-19 RT-PCR tests in diagnosing Omicron strain

BATM (LSE: BVC; TASE: BVC), a leading provider of real-time technologies for networking solutions and medical laboratory systems, announces that its COVID-19 RT-PCR kits have been validated as effective against the new SARS-CoV-2 variant, Omicron, and confirms that they can accurately diagnose COVID-19 in someone with this new strain.

The new SARS-CoV-2 variant – B.1.1.529, named Omicron – has a large number of spike (S) protein mutations as well as mutations in other genomic regions. These mutations enable COVID-19 to go undetected with some competing COVID-19 tests, providing false negative results.

The Group continually tests its kits, which were developed in partnership with Tor Vergata University in Rome, Italy, against any mutation that is perceived to be clinically material to ensure its kits are accurately able to detect all known variants of COVID-19. The Group's COVID-19 RT-PCR 4 gene kit, which is also used for the Group's saliva-based test, as well as its RT-PCR 3 gene kit have been confirmed by the Group as effective against the Omicron strain, which has been verified by external scientific experts. The kits had also previously been proven as valid against the alpha, beta, gamma and delta variants.

BATM's RT-PCR COVID-19 kits, which are molecular diagnostics tests, are developed and produced by the Group's Adaltis subsidiary as MOLgen SARS-CoV-2 (S) 4 gene and MOLgen SARS-CoV-2 3 gene. Further detail on the MOLgen SARS-CoV-2 kits can be found below and in the following report published in Nature: here.

Dr Zvi Marom, CEO of BATM, said: "I am pleased to confirm that our COVID-19 RT-PCR tests are effective in accurately detecting all COVID-19 variants, including in those infected with this latest mutation. Viruses constantly change through mutation and our diagnostics platform has been built on our recognition that we must always think of the future. As a result, we were able to rapidly develop COVID-19 tests in response to the outbreak and those kits have been designed to be effective against the emergence of new variants."

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Further information

MOLgen SARS-CoV-2 Real Time RT-PCR Kit is used for the qualitative detection of Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), by Reverse Transcription (RT) and Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) from RNA extracted from human respiratory specimens such as nasopharyngeal swabs, oropharyngeal swabs, salivary specimens and bronchoalveolar lavage fluid (BALF).

MOLgen kits are available in two formats: 3 gene or 4 gene kits.

For the 4 gene kit, the primer and probe set is designed to detect SARS-CoV-2 identifying 4 targets: 3 specific for SARS-CoV-2 (N gene, S Gene, E gene) and 1 common for sabercoviridae (RdRp gene).

The 3 gene kit targets the N, E and RdRp genes and was proven as specific and sensitive, Favaro et al. Scientific Reports, 2021, 11, 18995.

The detection of amplified virus RNA fragment is performed in fluorimeter channel FAM (RdRp gene), ROX/Texas Red (E gene), Cy5.5/Alexa Fluor (S gene) and CY5 (N gene).

The use of human beta actina as Internal Control (IC) on HEX channel ensure the monitoring correct amplification and cellularity of the samples.