



# Second Sight

## **Second Sight Argus® II Retinal Prosthesis System wins financial support agreement in France**

***36 blind patients with retinitis pigmentosa will receive groundbreaking Argus II 'bionic eye' treatment starting in September***

**Lausanne, Switzerland –August 18, 2014** - Second Sight Medical Products Inc. (Second Sight) today announces that the French Ministry of Health has officially approved financial support for the Argus II Retinal Prosthesis System. Through the Forfait Innovation scheme, the French Government will pay for the first wave of groundbreaking treatment for 36 patients with severe to total sight loss due to retinitis pigmentosa (RP) in France.

The decision by the French Ministry of Health to support the restoration of some functional vision to patients with no sight comes after the March 18, 2014 decision to add the Argus II device to the Forfait Innovation scheme. The scheme introduces breakthrough therapies to benefit patients across France.

Three French hospitals will begin the program on September 1st, in Paris (CHNO des Quinze-Vingts with Dr. Pierre-Olivier Barale and Dr. Saddek Mohand-Saïd), Strasbourg (at CHU with Prof. Helene Dollfus and Prof. David Gaucher) and Bordeaux (at CHU with Prof. Jean-François Korobelnik and Prof. Marie-Noelle Delyfer).

Second Sight gained European approval (CE Mark) for the Argus II system in 2011 and United States FDA approval in 2013. It remains the first approved retinal prosthesis treatment in the world. The Argus II has now been implanted in over 90 patients. Several patients have been using the system for more than seven years, which shows the long-term reliability of the device. Argus II has been the subject of 20 peer-reviewed articles, including the most recent one, "The Argus II prosthesis facilitates reaching and grasping tasks: a case series" by Kotecha et al in BMC Ophthalmology 2014, 14:71.

The Argus II works by converting video images captured by a miniature camera housed in the patient's glasses into a series of small electrical pulses that are transmitted wirelessly to electrodes on the surface of the retina. These pulses stimulate the retina's remaining cells resulting in the corresponding perception of patterns of light in the brain. The patient then learns to interpret these visual patterns to regain some visual function.

"We have standardized the treatment pathway for retinitis pigmentosa through a custom design for patients with severe to complete sight loss," said Gregoire Cosendai, VP Europe for Second Sight. "It is increasingly available in European countries and we are happy to be able to offer the routine procedure in France."

### **About Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP)**

RP is a rare, hereditary disease that causes a progressive degeneration of the light-sensitive cells of the retina, leading to significant visual impairment and ultimately blindness. There are

an estimated 1.2 million people worldwide with RP. Second Sight's Argus II System employs electrical stimulation to bypass the defunct cells and stimulate remaining viable retinal cells inducing visual perception in blind individuals. The Argus II is the first artificial retina to receive approval in Europe (CE Mark) and in the USA.

### **About the Argus® II System**

The Argus II System is the second generation of retinal prosthesis developed by Second Sight. The Argus I system was launched in 2002. The system has been approved in Europe and in the US. It has been implanted into more than 90 patients worldwide. The system is reimbursed in Germany, Italy and in the US. It is available at 16 centers of excellence in Europe.

### **About Second Sight**

Second Sight Medical Products, Inc., located in Los Angeles, California, was founded in 1998 to create a retinal prosthesis to provide sight to patients blinded from outer retinal degenerations such as RP. Through dedication and innovation, Second Sight's mission is to develop, manufacture and market implantable visual prosthetics to enable blind individuals to achieve greater independence. US Headquarters are in Sylmar, California. European Headquarters are in Lausanne, Switzerland.

For more information, visit <http://www.2-sight.com>

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