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Likarda Reaffirms Strong Momentum and Continued Execution Following Leadership Transition

Kansas City, MO – January 23, 2026 – Likarda, a leader in hydrogel-based drug delivery and cell therapy enabling technologies, today announced that Dr. Stella Vnook has stepped down from her role as Chief Executive Officer. The transition marks the completion of a planned leadership period during which Stella was instrumental in increasing Likarda's visibility, strengthening strategic partnerships, and positioning the company for its next phase of growth.

"We are grateful to Stella for her leadership and the momentum she helped build," said Lisa Stehno-Bittel, PhD, Founder and President of Likarda. "Under her guidance, Likarda expanded industry awareness of our Core-Shell Spherification® (CSS®) platform and hydrogel technologies while deepening relationships across the biologics, cell therapy, and drug delivery sectors. We wish Stella every success in her next chapter."

Likarda emphasized that the company remains in a strong operational and strategic position, with its scientific, commercial, and technical teams fully aligned on the roadmap ahead. The company continues to advance multiple feasibility studies, expand platform applications including its NovoSphere™, AegisCell™, and LiberaCell™ hydrogel technologies and progress development of its next-generation encapsulation equipment toward clinical and commercial readiness.

"Likarda's work continues with full focus and intensity," said Shelly Adams, Chief Commercial Officer of Likarda. "Our partnerships, customer programs, and R&D initiatives remain on track, and our leadership team is deeply committed to executing the company's vision. We look forward to building on the strong foundation established during Stella's tenure."

The company noted that its strategic direction, technology roadmap, and partner engagements will proceed uninterrupted as it advances toward key milestones throughout 2026.

For more information about Likarda and its drug delivery and cell therapy encapsulation technologies, please visit www.likarda.com.

About Likarda

Likarda is a biotechnology company advancing next-generation delivery technologies for cell therapies, biologics, and other complex medicines. Our mission is to improve therapeutic performance and enable more durable, patient-friendly treatment options for chronic and life-threatening diseases. At the core of our platform is Core-Shell Spherification® (CSS®), an

innovative hydrogel-based encapsulation technology that surrounds cells, proteins, and other biomolecules with a protective, biocompatible shell. This barrier helps maintain viability, enhances stability, reduces degradation, and enables precise, localized delivery within the body.

CSS® is fully customizable, offering tunable degradation, controlled release, cryopreservation advantages, and compatibility with GMP manufacturing workflows. Together, these capabilities help partners overcome critical challenges in drug delivery, manufacturing, and logistics.

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