

February 3, 2000

ICON ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF UK BASED REGULATORY CONSULTANCY GROUP

Dublin, Ireland, February 3, 2000 - ICON plc (NASDAQ: ICLR), a global full service clinical research organisation, today announced the acquisition of YRCR Ltd, a leading UK pharmaceutical and medical device regulatory affairs consulting group.

Based in Henley, England, YRCR provides advice and support, including full marketing authorisation applications, to a broad range of European, US and Japanese clients. It also provides "in-sourced" professional staff to clients on a contract basis.

Under the terms of the agreement ICON has acquired YRCR for a consideration of up to \$5.8 million, a portion of which is contingent on future performance. The consideration will be satisfied through a combination of cash and shares. ICON has also entered into an employment agreement with the company's founder. Accounted for a purchase transaction, ICON expects the acquisition to be neutral to earnings in 2000.

"YRCR adds an important new service to ICON's already strong capabilities in Europe," said Dr Markus Weissbach, President of ICON's European Operations. "Coupled with our acquisition of Pacific Research Associates, announced earlier this week, YRCR gives ICON the ability to offer broad regulatory services to its clients in both the US and Europe, and creates good opportunities for cross selling between the companies."

"We are pleased to be able to join with ICON, a high quality global CRO", said YRCR Managing Director Yvonne Roberton. "ICON's international network and client base opens many new opportunities for YRCR, and we look forward to capitalising on these".

ICON provides contract clinical research services to the pharmaceutical industry world-wide. The company currently has 16 offices in 11 countries and almost 900 employees world-wide, over half of whom are located in the US. From these locations, the company is managing projects in over 30 countries on four continents.

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Information in this press release contains "forward looking statements". These statements involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially including, without limitation, actual operating performance, the ability to maintain large client contracts or enter into new contracts, the ability to manage the opening of new offices, and the ability to maintain client relationships. Additional factors that could cause actual results to differ materially are discussed in the Company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including its Forms 20-F, F-1 and S-8.

Source: ICON plc

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