Onconova Therapeutics, Inc.
Form S-3
October 08, 2014

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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 8, 2014

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Form S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Onconova Therapeutics, Inc.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in charter)

Delaware	**22-3627252**
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

375 Pheasant Run
Newtown, PA 18940
(267) 759-3680
(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Ramesh Kumar, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Onconova Therapeutics, Inc.
375 Pheasant Run
Newtown, PA 18954
(267) 759-3680
(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number including area code, of agent for service)

Copy to:
Jeffrey P. Libson
Donald R. Readlinger, Esq.
Pepper Hamilton LLP
Suite 400
301 Carnegie Center
Princeton, NJ 08543-5276
Tel: (609) 452-0808
Fax: (609) 452-1147

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. o

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box. ý

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. o

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. o

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box. o

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box. o

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer o	Accelerated filer o	Non-accelerated filer ý (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company o

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Amount to be Registered	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Amount of Registration Fee
Primary Offering by Onconova Therapeutics, Inc.:				
Common Stock, par value $0.01 per share	(1)	(2)	(2)	
Preferred Stock, par value $0.01 per share	(1)	(2)	(2)	
Debt Securities	(1)	(2)	(2)	
Warrants	(1)	(2)	(2)	
Units	(1)	(2)	(2)	
Total for Primary Offering			$100,000,000.00	$11,620.00(3)
Secondary Offering by Selling Stockholders:				
Common Stock, par value $0.01 per share	228,647(4)	$4.26(4)	974,036.22(4)	113.18(4)
Total for Primary and Secondary Offering:			$100,974,036.22	$11,733.18

(1) With respect to the primary offering, there are being registered hereunder such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock, such indeterminate principal amount of debt securities, such indeterminate number of warrants to purchase common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, and such indeterminate number of units as shall have an aggregate initial offering price not to exceed $100,000,000, less the aggregate dollar amount of all securities previously issued hereunder in the primary offering. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price of such debt securities shall be in such greater principal amount as shall result in an aggregate offering price not to exceed $100,000,000, less the aggregate dollar amount of all securities previously issued hereunder in the primary offering. Any such securities registered hereunder may be sold separately or as units with the other securities registered hereunder. The securities registered hereunder also include such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock and amount of debt securities as may be issued upon conversion of or exchange for preferred stock or debt securities that provide for conversion or exchange, upon exercise of warrants or pursuant to the anti-dilution provisions of any of such securities. In addition, pursuant to Rule 416 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, the securities being registered hereunder include such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock as may be issuable with respect to the securities being registered hereunder

as a result of stock splits, stock dividends or similar transaction.

(2) The proposed maximum offering price per unit of each class of security registered hereunder will be determined from time to time in connection with, and at the time of, the issuance of the securities and is not specified as to each class of security pursuant to General Instruction II.D. of Form S-3, as amended.

(3) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act based on the proposed maximum aggregate offering price of all securities listed.

(4) In addition, up to 228,647 shares of common stock may be sold from time to time pursuant to this registration statement by certain selling stockholders, including those named herein, in a secondary offering. With respect to shares of common stock to be offered by the selling stockholders in the secondary offering, the price has been estimated solely for the purpose of calculating the registration fee, pursuant to Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act, based on the average of the high and low prices reported for the shares of common stock as reported on the Nasdaq Global Market on October 2, 2014.

The registrant hereby amends this registration statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this registration statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act or until the registration statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This registration statement contains two prospectuses:

- A base prospectus which covers the offering, issuance and sale by the registrant from time to time of any combination of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, warrants or units described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to a maximum aggregate offering price of $100,000,000, as well as the offering of up to 228,657 shares of common stock by certain selling stockholders, including those named in this prospectus; and

- A supplemental prospectus covering the offering, issuance and sale by the registrant of up to a maximum aggregate offering price of $20,000,000 of the registrant's common stock that may be issued and sold under a sales agreement with Cantor Fitzgerald & Co.

The base prospectus immediately follows this explanatory note. The supplemental prospectus immediately follows the base prospectus. The common stock that may be offered, issued and sold by the registrant under the supplemental prospectus is included in the $100,000,000 of securities that may be offered, issued and sold by the registrant under the base prospectus.

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The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting offers to buy these securities in any state or other jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED OCTOBER 8, 2014

PROSPECTUS

Onconova Therapeutics, Inc.

$100,000,000
Common Stock, Preferred Stock,
Debt Securities, Warrants and Units
and
228,647 Shares of Common Stock

This prospectus covers our offer and sale from time to time of any combination of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, warrants or units described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides a general description of the securities we may offer and sell. Each time we offer and sell securities we will provide specific terms of the securities offered in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also describe the specific manner in which we will offer the securities and may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. The aggregate offering price of all securities sold by us under this prospectus may not exceed $100,000,000.

This prospectus also covers the resale by selling stockholders, including those identified in the "Selling Stockholders" section of this prospectus, of up to an aggregate of 228,647 shares of our common stock. A prospectus supplement or amendment may also be required in connection with certain sales of common stock by the selling stockholders. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. We will not receive proceeds from the sale of shares of our common stock by the selling stockholders.

You should read this prospectus and any supplement carefully before you purchase any of our securities. **This prospectus may not be used to offer and sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.**

The securities may be offered and sold by us or selling stockholders from time to time at fixed prices, at market prices or at negotiated prices, and may be offered and sold to or through one or more underwriters, dealers or agents or directly to purchasers on a continuous or delayed basis. See "Plan of Distribution."

Our common stock is currently listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "ONTX". On October 2, 2014, the last reported sale price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market was $4.29 per share.

As of August 29, 2014, the aggregate market value of our outstanding common stock held by non-affiliates, or the public float, was $66,251,060, which was calculated based on shares of our outstanding common stock held by non-affiliates and on a price of $5.22 per share, the last reported sale price for our common stock, on August 29, 2014. Other than the securities offered by this prospectus, we have not offered any securities pursuant to General Instruction I.B.6 of Form S-3 during the 12 calendar months prior to and including the date of this prospectus.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information.

Investing in these securities involves risks, including those set forth in the "Risk Factors" section of the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus and of our most recent Annual

Report on Form 10-K, as revised or supplemented by our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC since the filing of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, each of which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Neither the SEC nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful and complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

This prospectus is dated , 2014.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC. This prospectus covers the primary offering by us of up to an aggregate of $100,000,000 of securities and the secondary offering by the selling stockholders identified herein of up to an aggregate of 228,647 shares of our common stock. We may offer and sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus and the selling stockholders may offer and sell shares of common stock in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer and sell. Each time we offer and sell securities under this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you that may contain material information relating to these offerings. The prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in any documents that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus. You should read this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, together with the information incorporated herein by reference as described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information," before investing in any of the securities offered.

We have filed or incorporated by reference exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. You should read the exhibits carefully for provisions that may be important to you.

This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

Neither we nor any selling stockholder has authorized any dealer, salesman or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement. This prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and any accompanying supplement to this prospectus constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street NE, Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the SEC's public reference facilities by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. You can request copies of these documents, upon payment of a duplicating fee, by writing to the SEC at its principal office at 100 F Street NE, Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549-1004. The SEC maintains an Internet website at http://www.sec.gov that contains reports, proxy and information statements, and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. Our SEC filings are accessible through the Internet at that website. Our reports on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K, and amendments to those reports, are also available for download, free of charge, as soon as reasonably practicable after these reports are filed with the SEC, at our website at www.onconova.com. The content contained in, or that can be accessed through, our website is not a part of this prospectus.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, as used in this prospectus, the terms "Onconova," "Onconova Therapeutics," "Company," "we," "us" and "our" refer to Onconova Therapeutics, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries.

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INCORPORATION OF INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" the information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013 that we filed with the SEC on March 20, 2014, including the information required by Part III, Items 10 through 14, of Form 10-K, which is incorporated by reference to our definitive proxy statement for our 2014 annual meeting of stockholders filed on April 29, 2014;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarters ended March 31, 2014 and June 30, 2014, that we filed with the SEC on May 15, 2014 and August 14, 2014, respectively;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 20, 2014, March 7, 2014, May 2, 2014 and May 23, 2014;

The description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed on July 23, 2013 (Registration no. 001-36020) with the SEC, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description;

All documents filed by us with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, after the date of the initial filing of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and prior to the effectiveness of such registration statement; and

All documents filed by us with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act on or after the date of this prospectus and before we stop offering the securities under this prospectus.

We will provide without charge to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom this prospectus is delivered, upon his or her written or oral request, a copy of any or all documents referred to above which have been or may be incorporated by reference into this prospectus but not delivered with this prospectus excluding exhibits to those documents unless they are specifically incorporated by reference into those documents. You can request those documents from us, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at: Onconova Therapeutics, Inc., 375 Pheasant Run, Newtown, Pennsylvania, 18940, (267) 759-3036, Attention: Benjamin Hoffman.

The most recent information that we file with the SEC automatically updates and supersedes older information. The information contained in any such filing will be deemed to be a part of this prospectus, commencing on the date on which the filing is made.

Information furnished under Items 2.02 or 7.01 (or corresponding information furnished under Item 9.01 or included as an exhibit) in any past or future Current Report on Form 8-K that we file with the SEC, unless otherwise specified in such report, is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus contain, and any prospectus supplement may contain, forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, included or incorporated in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement regarding our strategy, future operations, financial position, future revenues, projected costs, prospects, plans and

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objectives of management are forward-looking statements. We may, in some cases, use terms such as "believes," "estimates," "anticipates," "expects," "plans," "intends," "may," "could," "might," "will," "should," "approximately" or other words that convey uncertainty of future events or outcomes to identify these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements appear in a number of places throughout this prospectus and include statements regarding our intentions, beliefs, projections, outlook, analyses or current expectations concerning, among other things, our ongoing and planned non-clinical development and clinical trials, the timing of and our ability to make regulatory filings and obtain and maintain regulatory approvals for our product candidates, protection of our intellectual property portfolio, the degree of clinical utility of our product candidates, particularly in specific patient populations, our ability to develop commercial functions, expectations regarding clinical trial data, our results of operations, cash needs, financial condition, liquidity, prospects, growth and strategies, the industry in which we operate and the trends that may affect the industry or us.

By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties because they relate to events, competitive dynamics and industry change, and depend on the economic circumstances that may or may not occur in the future or may occur on longer or shorter timelines than anticipated. Although we believe that we have a reasonable basis for each forward-looking statement contained in this prospectus, we caution you that forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and that our actual results of operations, financial condition and liquidity, and the development of the industry in which we operate may differ materially from the forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus. In addition, even if our results of operations, financial condition and liquidity, and events in the industry in which we operate are consistent with the forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus, they may not be predictive of results or developments in future periods.

Actual results could differ materially from our forward-looking statements due to a number of factors, including risks related to:

- our estimates regarding expenses, future revenues, capital requirements and needs for additional financing;
- the success and timing of our nonclinical studies and clinical trials;
- the difficulties in obtaining and maintaining regulatory approval of our product candidates, and the labeling under any approval we may obtain;
- our plans and ability to develop and commercialize our product candidates;
- our failure to recruit or retain key scientific or management personnel or to retain our executive officers;
- the size and growth of the potential markets for our product candidates and our ability to serve those markets;
- regulatory developments in the United States and foreign countries;
- the rate and degree of market acceptance of any of our product candidates;
- obtaining and maintaining intellectual property protection for our product candidates and our proprietary technology;
- the successful development of our commercialization capabilities, including sales and marketing capabilities;
- recently enacted and future legislation and regulations regarding the healthcare system;
- the success of competing therapies and products that are or become available;

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our dependence on collaboration agreements with other pharmaceutical companies, such as Baxter Healthcare SA, or Baxter, and SymBio Pharmaceuticals Limited, or SymBio, for commercialization of our products and our ability to achieve certain milestones under those agreements; and

the performance of third parties, including contract research organizations and third-party manufacturers.

Any forward-looking statements that we make in this prospectus speak only as of the date of such statements, and we undertake no obligation to update such statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this prospectus or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events. Comparisons of results for current and any prior periods are not intended to express any future trends or indications of future performance, unless expressed as such, and should only be viewed as historical data.

You should also read carefully the factors described in the "Risk Factors" section of this prospectus and set forth in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as revised or supplemented by our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC since the filing of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, to better understand the risks and uncertainties inherent in our business and underlying any forward-looking statements. As a result of these factors, we cannot assure you that the forward-looking statements in this prospectus will prove to be accurate. Furthermore, if our forward-looking statements prove to be inaccurate, the inaccuracy may be material. In light of the significant uncertainties in these forward-looking statements, you should not regard these statements as a representation or warranty by us or any other person that we will achieve our objectives and plans in any specified timeframe, or at all.

We obtained the industry, market and competitive position data in this prospectus and the documents incorporated into this prospectus from our own internal estimates and research as well as from industry and general publications and research surveys and studies conducted by third parties. Industry publications and surveys generally state that the information contained therein has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. We believe this data is accurate in all material respects as of the date of this prospectus.

RISK FACTORS

Our business is influenced by many factors that are difficult to predict, and that involve uncertainties that may materially affect actual operating results, cash flows and financial condition. Before making an investment decision, you should carefully consider these risks, including those set forth in the "Risk Factors" section of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as revised or supplemented by our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC since the filing of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, each of which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus, and you should also carefully consider any other information we include or incorporate by reference in this prospectus or include in any applicable prospectus supplement. Each of the risks described in these sections and documents could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects, and could result in a partial or complete loss of your investment.

ONCONOVA THERAPEUTICS, INC.

Overview

We are a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing novel small molecule drug candidates to treat cancer. Using our proprietary chemistry platform, we have created an extensive library of targeted anti-cancer agents designed to work against specific cellular pathways important to cancer cells. We believe that the drug candidates in our pipeline have the

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potential to be efficacious in a wide variety of cancers without causing harm to normal cells. We have three clinical-stage product candidates and several preclinical programs.

Rigosertib

Rigosertib, our most advanced product candidate, is being tested as a single agent and in combination with azacitidine and with chemoradiation therapy, in clinical trials of patients with myelodysplastic syndromes, or MDS, and other cancers. To date, we have enrolled more than 1,000 patients in rigosertib clinical trials. We have collaboration agreements with Baxter Healthcare SA, or Baxter, and SymBio Pharmaceuticals Limited, or SymBio, which grant Baxter certain rights to commercialize rigosertib in Europe and SymBio in Japan and Korea. We have retained development and commercialization rights to rigosertib in the rest of the world, including in the United States. Rigosertib is believed to act in cancer cells as an inhibitor of two important cellular signaling pathways, PI3K and PLK, both of which are frequently over-active in cancer cells. By inhibiting the PI3K pathway, rigosertib promotes tumor cell apoptosis. By modulating PLK pathway activity in cancer cells, rigosertib inhibits cellular division, leading to chromosome disorganization and death in these cells.

Rigosertib IV for higher risk MDS

In February 2014, we announced top-line results of a Phase 3 trial of an intravenous formulation of rigosertib, or rigosertib IV, in higher-risk MDS patients who had progressed on, failed to respond to, or relapsed after prior therapy with hypomethylating agents, or HMAs. Although the results of this study showed numerical improvement in median overall survival in the rigosertib treated patients, the observed improvement in survival of 2.4 months was not sufficient to establish the required level of statistical significance and, therefore did not achieve the primary endpoint of the trial.

During the second quarter of this year, we met with the FDA to discuss the future development of rigosertib IV for higher-risk MDS patients. Based on that meeting, we believe that we may be able to seek approval of rigosertib IV specifically for patients who had progressed on or failed to respond to previous treatment with HMAs. These type of patients are also known collectively as Primary HMA Failures. In addition, together with Baxter, our commercialization partner in Europe, we have met with several European national regulatory agencies to discuss the unmet medical need and appropriate regulatory pathways in Primary HMA Failure patients within Europe. We anticipate a further update of our development plan for rigosertib IV in higher-risk MDS patients during the fourth quarter of 2014.

Oral Rigosertib for lower-risk MDS

In December 2013, we presented data at the Annual ASH Meeting from our Phase 2 trial of an oral formulation of rigosertib in lower-risk MDS patients. Unlike higher-risk MDS patients who suffer from a shortfall in normal blood cells, or cytopenias, and elevated levels of cancer, or blast, cells in their bone marrow, lower-risk MDS patients suffer from cytopenias only, typically low levels of red blood cells, white blood cells and/or platelets. Thus, all MDS patients need interventions to improve their low blood counts, either by therapeutic approaches or by transfusions. Phase 2 clinical data revealed the activity of single agent oral rigosertib in transfusion-dependent, lower-risk MDS patients and the potential of a DNA-based test performed on bone marrow cells of patients before they receive oral rigosertib to identify lower-risk MDS patients who are more likely to respond to oral rigosertib. We are currently enrolling an additional 20 lower-risk MDS patients in this Phase 2 trial to expand our data on the utility of this genomic DNA test for the identification of patients likely to respond to rigosertib. If we and Baxter mutually agree to progress the development of oral rigosertib in lower-risk MDS patients, we would be entitled to a milestone payment of $25 million under our development and license agreement with Baxter, and we would be required to use our commercially reasonable efforts to progress the development of rigosertib for this indication to a drug approval application in Europe.

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In addition, recruitment is continuing in a second Phase 2 trial of oral rigosertib in lower-risk MDS patients to explore oral rigosertib dose and schedule optimization. We are comparing continuous dosing with interrupted (two out of three weeks) dosing in a three-week treatment cycle in both of the ongoing Phase 2 trials. Based on the anticipated timing of the DNA-based test and dosing optimization data, which we expect to receive in the fourth quarter of 2014, we believe that a pivotal study of oral rigosertib in lower-risk MDS patients will not commence before the first half of 2015. Any such pivotal study will depend on the results of the ongoing Phase 2 trials and would be subject to regulatory discussions and guidance.

Oral rigosertib in combination with azacitidine in MDS and AML

We have completed the Phase 1 portion of a Phase 1/2 clinical trial of oral rigosertib in combination with azacitidine, and we are now enrolling patients in the Phase 2 portion at multiple sites in the U.S. and Europe. In the Phase 1 portion of the trial, the combination therapy was well tolerated in the study population. The combination dosing schedule of oral rigosertib in the final cohort (two doses per day; 560mg in the morning and 280 mg in the afternoon) given during weeks one, two and three of a four-week treatment cycle) with the indicated dose of azacitidine (75 mg/m2 administered every day either subcutaneously or intravenously, given during week two of a four-week treatment cycle) has been selected for the Phase 2 portion of the trial. The Phase 2 portion of the trial has been designed to assess whether treatment with rigosertib, in combination with azacitidine, has a benefical effect on bone marrow and peripheral blood blast cell counts and symptoms of disease progression in patients with MDS and AML. We expect to present results of the Phase 1 portion of this combination trial in the fourth quarter of 2014.

Oral rigosertib in head and neck and other carcinomas

We recently announced results from a single-agent Phase 2 study of oral rigosertib in patients with second- and third-line head and neck cancers and other refractory cancers. In this trial, oral rigosertib was well tolerated in advanced cancer patients. Stable disease, lasting up to nine months, was the best response observed in the head and neck cancer patients. One patient with lung cancer and one patient with anal cancer also achieved stable disease. Based on these findings, we have concluded that there is not sufficient justification for further development of oral rigosertib as a single agent in these indications.

A Phase 1 study of oral rigosertib in combination with chemoradiotherapy (platinum plus radiation) has been initiated in head and neck and other carcinoma patients. We expect to have evaluable data from this study in 2015.

Briciclib

Our second clinical-stage product candidate is briciclib, a small molecule targeting an important intracellular regulatory protein, cyclin D1, which is often found at elevated levels in cancer cells. We have initiated a multi-center Phase 1 clinical trial testing IV briciclib in adult patients with advanced cancer and solid tumors. Upon completion of this ongoing Phase 1 trial, we will assess potential further development for briciclib.

Recilisib

Our third clinical-stage product candidate, recilisib, is being developed in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense for acute radiation syndromes. We have conducted animal studies and clinical trials of recilisib under the FDA's Animal Efficacy Rule, which permits marketing approval for new medical countermeasures for which human efficacy studies are not feasible or ethical, by relying on evidence from animal studies in appropriate animal models to support efficacy in humans. We have

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completed four Phase 1 trials to evaluate the safety and pharmacokinetics of recilisib in healthy human adult subjects using both subcutaneous and oral formulations. Ongoing studies of recilisib are being conducted with government funding, and we anticipate that any future development of recilisib beyond our ongoing studies would be conducted solely with government funding.

Preclinical Product Candidates

In addition to our three clinical-stage product candidates, we have several product candidates that target kinases, cellular metabolism or cell division in preclinical development. We intend to explore additional collaborations to further the development of these product candidates as we focus internally on our more advanced programs.

Our operations to date have included our organization and staffing, business planning, raising capital, in-licensing technology from research institutions, identifying potential product candidates, developing product candidates and building strategic alliances, as well as undertaking non-clinical studies and clinical trials of our product candidates.

Since commencing operations, we have dedicated a significant portion of our resources to our development efforts for our clinical-stage product candidates, particularly rigosertib. We anticipate that a significant portion of our operating expenses will continue to be related to research and development as we continue to advance rigosertib and our other clinical-stage product candidates and, to a lesser extent, our preclinical programs. In July 2013, we completed our initial public offering, or IPO, of common stock, from which we received net proceeds of $79.8 million. Prior to the consummation of the IPO, we funded our operations primarily through the sale of preferred stock amounting to $144.7 million, including $50.0 million that Baxter invested in our Series J Preferred Stock in 2012, as well as proceeds from the issuance of convertible debt and a stockholder loan amounting to $26.8 million in the aggregate, all of which was later converted into shares of our preferred stock, which shares converted to common stock upon the IPO. We have also received upfront payments of $7.5 million from SymBio and $50.0 million from Baxter in connection with our collaboration agreements with those parties. We have also received an aggregate of $8.0 million from The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, or LLS, under a funding agreement.

We expect to incur significant expenses and operating losses for the foreseeable future as we continue the development and clinical trials of, and seek regulatory approval for, our product candidates, even if milestones under our license and collaboration agreements are met. If we obtain regulatory approval for any of our product candidates, we expect to incur significant commercialization expenses. We do not currently have an organization for the sales, marketing and distribution of pharmaceutical products. We may rely on licensing and co-promotion agreements with strategic or collaborative partners for the commercialization of our products in the United States and other territories. If we choose to build a commercial infrastructure to support marketing in the United States for any of our product candidates that achieve regulatory approval, such commercial infrastructure could be expected to include a targeted, oncology sales force supported by sales management, internal sales support, an internal marketing group and distribution support. To develop the appropriate commercial infrastructure internally, we would have to invest financial and management resources, some of which would have to be deployed prior to having any certainty about marketing approval.

Furthermore, we have incurred, and expect to continue to incur, additional costs associated with operating as a public company. Accordingly, we will seek to fund our operations primarily through business development transactions, public equity or debt financings or other sources. Other additional financing may not be available to us on acceptable terms, or at all. Our failure to raise capital as and when needed or on less favorable terms could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and our ability to pursue our business strategy.

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You can get more information regarding our business and industry by reading our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and the other reports we file with the SEC. See "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Information by Reference."

CORPORATE INFORMATION

We were incorporated in Delaware in December 1998 and commenced operations in January 1999. Our principal executive offices are located at 375 Pheasant Run, Newtown, Pennsylvania 18940, and our telephone number is (267) 759-3680. Our website address is www.onconova.com. The information on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not part of this prospectus.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, we anticipate that the net proceeds from our sale of any securities will be used to fund the development of our clinical and preclinical programs, for other research and development activities and for general corporate purposes, which may include capital expenditures and funding our working capital needs. We expect from time to time to evaluate the acquisition of businesses, products and technologies for which a portion of the net proceeds may be used, although we currently are not planning or negotiating any such transactions. Pending such uses, we may invest the net proceeds in investment grade interest-bearing securities.

The amounts actually expended for each purpose may vary significantly depending upon numerous factors, including the amount and timing of the proceeds from this offering and progress with our clinical development programs. Expenditures will also depend upon the establishment of collaborative arrangements with other companies, the availability of additional financing and other factors. Investors will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding the application of the proceeds of any sale of securities.

In the case of sales by selling stockholders, we will not receive any of the proceeds from such sales.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

Earnings were insufficient to cover fixed charges by $35.5 million for the six months ended June 30, 2014 and $62.1 million, $29.9 million and $26.3 million for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2013, 2012 and 2011, respectively. "Earnings" consists of net loss from continuing operations before income tax expense and fixed charges. "Fixed charges" consist of interest expense, capitalized interest and the portion of rents that we believe to be representative of the interest factor. Currently, we have no shares of preferred stock outstanding and have not paid any dividends on preferred stock in the periods presented.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

We may offer shares of our common stock and preferred stock, various series of debt securities, warrants or units to purchase any of such securities, with a total value of up to $100,000,000, from time to time in one or more offerings under this prospectus at prices and on terms to be determined by market conditions at the time of the offering. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities that we may offer. In connection with each offering, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will describe the specific amounts, prices and terms of the securities being offered, including, to the extent applicable:

- designation or classification;
- aggregate offering price;

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rates and times of payment of dividends;

redemption, conversion or exchange terms;

conversion or exchange prices or rates and any provisions for changes to or adjustments in the conversion or exchange prices or rates and in the securities or other property receivable upon conversion or exchange;

restrictive covenants;

voting or other rights; and

important federal income tax considerations.

The prospectus supplement also may add, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in documents we have incorporated by reference. However, no prospectus supplement will offer a security that is not included in the Registration Statement at the time of its effectiveness or offer a security of a type that is not described in this prospectus.

This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

Our authorized capital stock consists of 75,000,000 shares of common stock, par value $0.01 per share, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value $0.01 per share. As of September 30, 2014, 21,692,240 shares of our common stock, and no shares of our preferred stock, were outstanding.

Common Stock

Subject to the preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding preferred stock, holders of our common stock are entitled to receive ratably any dividends that may be declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available for that purpose. Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share on all matters voted on by stockholders, including the election of directors. Holders of our common stock do not have any conversion, redemption, sinking fund or preemptive rights. In the event of our dissolution, liquidation or winding up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in any assets remaining after the satisfaction in full of the prior rights of creditors and the aggregate liquidation preference of any preferred stock then outstanding. The rights, preferences and privileges of the holders of our common stock are subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of the holders of shares of any series of preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future. All outstanding shares of our common stock are, and any shares of common stock that we may issue in the future will be, fully paid and non-assessable.

Preferred Stock

We may issue any class of preferred stock in any series. Our board of directors has the authority, subject to limitations prescribed under Delaware law, to issue preferred stock in one or more series, to establish from time to time the number of shares to be included in each series and to fix the designation, powers, preferences and rights of the shares of each series and any of its qualifications, limitations and restrictions. Our board of directors can also increase or decrease the number of shares of any series, but not below the number of shares of that series then outstanding. Our board of directors may authorize the issuance of preferred stock with voting or conversion rights that could adversely affect the voting power or other rights of the holders of the common stock. The issuance of preferred stock, while providing flexibility in connection with possible acquisitions and other corporate purposes, could, among other things, have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in

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control of our company and may adversely affect the market price of our common stock and the voting and other rights of the holders of common stock.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Law and Provisions in Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Delaware Anti-Takeover Law

We are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. Section 203 generally prohibits a public Delaware corporation from engaging in a "business combination" with an "interested stockholder" for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person became an interested stockholder, unless:

- prior to the date of the transaction, the board of directors of the corporation approved either the business combination or the transaction which resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder;
- upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced, excluding specified shares; or
- at or subsequent to the date of the transaction, the business combination is approved by the board of directors and authorized at an annual or special meeting of stockholders, and not by written consent, by the affirmative vote of at least $66^{2}/_{3}\%$ of the outstanding voting stock which is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Section 203 defines a "business combination" to include:

- any merger or consolidation involving the corporation and the interested stockholder;
- any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition of 10% or more of the assets of the corporation to or with the interested stockholder;
- subject to exceptions, any transaction that results in the issuance or transfer by the corporation of any stock of the corporation to the interested stockholder;
- subject to exceptions, any transaction involving the corporation that has the effect of increasing the proportionate share of the stock of any class or series of the corporation beneficially owned by the interested stockholder; or
- the receipt by the interested stockholder of the benefit of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial benefits provided by or through the corporation.

In general, Section 203 defines an "interested stockholder" as any person that is:

- the owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation;
- an affiliate or associate of the corporation who was the owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation at any time within three years immediately prior to the relevant date; or

the affiliates and associates of the above.

Under specific circumstances, Section 203 makes it more difficult for an "interested stockholder" to effect various business combinations with a corporation for a three-year period, although the stockholders may, by adopting an amendment to the corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, elect not to be governed by this section, effective 12 months after adoption.

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws do not exclude us from the restrictions of Section 203. We anticipate that the provisions of Section 203 might encourage companies interested in acquiring us

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to negotiate in advance with our board of directors since the stockholder approval requirement would be avoided if a majority of the directors then in office approve either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder.

Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws may delay or discourage transactions involving an actual or potential change of control or change in our management, including transactions in which stockholders might otherwise receive a premium for their shares, or transactions that our stockholders might otherwise deem to be in their best interests. Therefore, these provisions could adversely affect the price of our common stock. Among other things, our certificate of incorporation and bylaws will:

permit our board of directors to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, with any rights, preferences and privileges as they may designate;

provide that all vacancies on our board of directors, including as a result of newly created directorships, may, except as otherwise required by law, be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of directors then in office, even if less than a quorum;

require that any action to be taken by our stockholders must be effected at a duly called annual or special meeting of stockholders and not be taken by written consent;

provide that stockholders seeking to present proposals before a meeting of stockholders or to nominate candidates for election as directors at a meeting of stockholders must provide advance notice in writing, and also specify requirements as to the form and content of a stockholder's notice;

not provide for cumulative voting rights, thereby allowing the holders of a majority of the shares of common stock entitled to vote in any election of directors to elect all of the directors standing for election; and

provide that special meetings of our stockholders may be called only by the board of directors or by such person or persons requested by a majority of the board of directors to call such meetings.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Wells Fargo Shareowner Services.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "ONTX."

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

This prospectus describes certain general terms and provisions of our debt securities. When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms of the series in a supplement to this prospectus. The following description of debt securities will apply to the debt securities offered by this prospectus unless we provide otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement for a particular series of debt securities may specify different or additional terms.

We may offer under this prospectus up to $100,000,000 aggregate principal amount of secured or unsecured debt securities, or if debt securities are issued at a discount, or in a foreign currency or composite currency, such principal amount as may be sold for an initial public offering price of up to

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$100,000,000. The debt securities may be either senior debt securities, senior subordinated debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The debt securities offered hereby will be issued under an indenture between us and a trustee. A form of indenture, which will be qualified under, subject to, and governed by, the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, is filed as an exhibit to the registration statement.

General

The terms of each series of debt securities will be established by or pursuant to a resolution of our board of directors and detailed or determined in the manner provided in a board of directors' resolution, an officers' certificate or by an indenture. The particular terms of each series of debt securities will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to the series, including any pricing supplement.

We can issue debt securities that may be in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium or at a discount. We will set forth in a prospectus supplement, including any pricing supplement, relating to any series of debt securities being offered, the initial offering price, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities:

- the title of the debt securities;
- the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the aggregate principal amount) at which we will sell the debt securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;
- the date or dates on which we will pay the principal on the debt securities;
- the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or the method used to determine the rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the debt securities will bear interest, the date or dates from which interest will accrue, the date or dates on which interest will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place or places where the principal of, and premium and interest on, the debt securities will be payable;
- the terms and conditions upon which we may redeem the debt securities;
- any obligation we have to redeem or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of debt securities;
- the dates on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase the debt securities at the option of the holders of debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of these repurchase obligations;
- the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of $1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;
- whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of certificated debt securities or global debt securities;
- the portion of principal amount of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount;

the currency of denomination of the debt securities;

the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of, and premium and interest on, the debt securities will be made;

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if payments of principal of, and premium or interest on, the debt securities will be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than that or those in which the debt securities are denominated, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to these payments will be determined;

the manner in which the amounts of payment of principal of, and premium or interest on, the debt securities will be determined, if these amounts may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies other than that in which the debt securities are denominated or designated to be payable or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index;

any provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities;

any addition to or change in the events of default described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;

any addition to or change in the covenants described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;

any other terms of the debt securities, which may modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to that series; and

any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the debt securities.

We may issue debt securities that are exchangeable and/or convertible into shares of our common stock or any class or series of preferred stock. The terms, if any, on which the debt securities may be exchanged and/or converted will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Such terms may include provisions for conversion, either mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option, in which case the number of shares of common stock, preferred stock or other securities to be received by the holders of debt securities would be calculated as of a time and in the manner stated in the prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, or if the principal of and any premium and interest on any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, we will provide you with information on the restrictions, elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to that issue of debt securities and such foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Payment of Interest and Exchange

Each debt security will be represented by either one or more global securities registered in the name of The Depository Trust Company, as Depositary, or a nominee of the Depositary (we will refer to any debt security represented by a global debt security as a book-entry debt security), or a certificate issued in definitive registered form (we will refer to any debt security represented by a certificated security as a certificated debt security), as described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

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Certificated Debt Securities

You may transfer or exchange certificated debt securities at the trustee's office or paying agencies in accordance with the terms of the indenture. No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with a transfer or exchange.

You may transfer certificated debt securities and the right to receive the principal of, and premium and interest on, certificated debt securities only by surrendering the old certificate representing those certificated debt securities and either we or the trustee will reissue the old certificate to the new holder or we or the trustee will issue a new certificate to the new holder.

Book-Entry Debt Securities

We may issue the debt securities of a series in the form of one or more book-entry debt securities that would be deposited with a depositary or its nominee identified in the prospectus supplement. We may issue book-entry debt securities in either temporary or permanent form. We will describe in the prospectus supplement the terms of any depositary arrangement and the rights and limitations of owners of beneficial interests in any book-entry debt security.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants to purchase debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or other securities or any combination of the foregoing. We may issue warrants independently or together with other securities. Warrants sold with other securities may be attached to or separate from the other securities. We will issue warrants under one or more warrant agreements between us and a warrant agent that we will name in the prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to any warrants that we may offer will include specific terms relating to the offering. We will file the form of any warrant agreement with the SEC, and you should read the warrant agreement for provisions that may be important to you. The prospectus supplement will include some or all of the following terms:

- the title of the warrants;
- the aggregate number of warrants offered;
- the designation, number and terms of the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or other securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants, and procedures by which those numbers may be adjusted;
- the exercise price of the warrants;
- the dates or periods during which the warrants are exercisable;
- the designation and terms of any securities with which the warrants are issued;
- if the warrants are issued as a unit with another security, the date, if any, on and after which the warrants and the other security will be separately transferable;
- if the exercise price is not payable in U.S. dollars, the foreign currency, currency unit or composite currency in which the exercise price is denominated;