

<b>OMB APPROVAL</b>	
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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <u>ROSS GEORGE K</u>  (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>C/O ACURA PHARAMCEUTICALS, INC.</u> <u>616 N NORTH COURT</u>  (Street) <u>PALATINE IL 60067</u>  (City) (State) (Zip)	2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>ACURA PHARMACEUTICALS, INC [ ACUR ]</u>	5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director 10% Owner Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)
	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>01/02/2018</u>	
	4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)	

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			
Common Stock	01/02/2018		M <sup>(1)</sup>		82,774	A	(2)	144,339 <sup>(3)</sup>	D	

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)		6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)	
				Code	V	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date						Title
Restricted Stock Units (2014 Plan)	(2)(4)	01/02/2018		M			82,774	(5)	(5)	Common Stock	82,774	(6)	0	D	
Restricted Stock Units (2017 Plan)	(2)(4)	01/02/2018		A		66,666		(7)	(7)	Common Stock	66,666	(6)	66,666	D	

**Explanation of Responses:**

- Represents exchange of restricted stock units.
- Par value of \$.01 per share must be paid by Reporting Person upon exchange of Restricted Stock Units for stock
- Does not include Restricted Stock Units.
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- 1,225 Restricted Stock Units being exchanged for stock vested in two equal installments on the last day of September 2014 and December 2014. With respect to 59,523 Restricted Stock Units, 25% of Restricted Stock Units vested on March 31, 2017, 25% vested on June 30, 2017; 25% vested on September 30, 2017 and 25% vested on December 31, 2017. With respect to the remaining, 22,026 Restricted Stock Units, 25% of Restricted Stock Units vested on March 31, 2016, 25% vested on June 30, 2016; 25% vested on September 30, 2016 and 25% vested on December 31, 2016. Restricted Stock Units are being exchanged on a one for one basis for common stock, in each case upon payment of par value.
- N/A
- 25% of Restricted Stock Units vest on the last day of each of March, June, September and December 2018, subject to immediate vesting in the event of a change of control and certain other events. Reporting Person may elect to exchange up to 40% of Restricted Stock Units for cash and the remaining Restricted Stock Units will be exchanged on a one for one basis for common stock, in each case upon payment of, or deduction of par value. Distributions in respect of vested Restricted Stock Units will be made on the first business day of January 2019, or earlier upon a change of control.

**Remarks:**

/s/ George Ross 01/03/2018

\*\* Signature of Reporting Person Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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