(APCs), such as dendritic cells (DCs). Its expression, however, is upregulated in these cells following activation by various immunological stimuli. The release of soluble SEMA4D from immune cells is also increased by cell activation.

[0005] SEMA4D has been implicated in the development of neurodegenerative disorders, autoimmune diseases, demyelinating diseases, and certain cancers. However, the effect of blocking SEMA4D signaling on the organization and function of the central nervous system (CNS) including brain and spinal cord and on behaviors controlled by the CNS remains to be elucidated. This is important because changes in the CNS have a profound influence on a subject's behavior and quality of life. In particular, such changes can impact a subject's neuropsychiatric behavior, cognitive behavior, and motor skills. There remains, therefore, a need for treatments for neurodegenerative disorders that alleviate the symptoms associated with the disorder.

SUMMARY

[0006] Methods for using semaphorin 4D binding molecules to alleviate symptoms in a subject having neurodegenerative disorders are disclosed herein. In one aspect, the present disclosure refers to use of an effective amount of an isolated antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof that specifically binds to semaphorin-4D (SEMA4D) in the preparation of a medicament for treating a subject having, determined to have or suspected of having Alzheimer's Disease (AD), wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof inhibits SEMA4D interactions with its receptor or a portion of its receptor and modulates astrocyte-mediated synaptic activity, thereby alleviating neuropsychiatric symptoms, cognitive symptoms, motor dysfunction, or any combination thereof, and wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof comprises a variable heavy chain (VH) comprising VHCDRs 1-3 comprising SEQ ID NOs 6, 7, and 8, respectively, and a variable light chain (VL) comprising VLCDRs 1-3 comprising SEQ ID NOs 14, 15, and 16, respectively. According to examples of the disclosure illustrated herein, there is provided a method for improving symptoms in a subject with a neurodegenerative disorder including administering to the subject an effective amount of an isolated binding molecule which specifically binds to semaphorin 4D (SEMA4D) and inhibits, suppresses, prevents, reverses or slows the effect of SEMA4D.

[0007] According to examples illustrated herein, there is provided a method of treating a subject with a neurodegenerative disorder including administering to the subject an effective amount of an isolated binding molecule which specifically binds to semaphorin 4D (SEMA4D), wherein the binding to SEMA4D acts to improve symptoms associated with the disorder.

[0008] Methods of alleviating symptoms in a subject having a neurodegenerative disorder are provided, comprising administering to that subject an effective amount of an isolated binding molecule which specifically binds to semaphorin-4D (SEMA4D). In certain examples of the methods, the binding molecule inhibits SEMA4D interaction with its receptor or a portion of its receptor. In certain examples of the methods, the receptor is selected from the group consisting of Plexin-B1 and Plexin-

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Use of an effective amount of an isolated antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof that specifically binds to semaphorin-4D (SEMA4D) in the preparation of a medicament for treating a subject having, determined to have or suspected of having Alzheimer's Disease (AD), wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof inhibits SEMA4D interactions with its receptor or a portion of its receptor and modulates astrocyte-mediated synaptic activity, thereby alleviating neuropsychiatric symptoms, cognitive symptoms, motor dysfunction, or any combination thereof, and wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof comprises a variable heavy chain (VH) comprising VHCDRs 1-3 comprising SEQ ID NOs 6, 7, and 8, respectively, and a variable light chain (VL) comprising VLCDRs 1-3 comprising SEQ ID NOs 14, 15, and 16, respectively.

2. The use of claim 1, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof competitively inhibits a reference monoclonal antibody selected from the group consisting of VX15/2503 or 67 from specifically binding to SEMA4D.

3. The use of claim 1 or 2, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof inhibits SEMA4D interaction with its receptor or a portion of its receptor.

4. The use of claim 3, wherein the receptor is selected from the group consisting of Plexin-B1 and Plexin-B2.

5. The use of any one of claims 1-4, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof inhibits SEMA4D-mediated Plexin-B1 signal transduction.

6. The use of any one of claims 1-5, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof specifically binds to the same SEMA4D epitope as a reference monoclonal antibody selected from the group consisting of VX15/2503 or 67.

7. The use of any one of claims 1-6, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof is monoclonal antibody VX15/2503 or 67.

8. The use of claim 1, wherein the VH and VL comprise, respectively, SEQ ID NO: 9 and SEQ ID NO: 17 or SEQ ID NO: 10 and SEQ ID NO: 18.

9. The use of claim 1, wherein the neuropsychiatric symptoms are selected from a group consisting of anxiety-like behavior, reduced spatial memory, impaired locomotion, and any combination thereof.

10. The use of claim 1, wherein the AD is early AD.

11. The use of any one of any one of claims 1-10, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof restores the number of somatostatin positive neurons, NYP-positive neurons, or both in the subject.

12. The use of any one of claims 1-11, wherein the subject is human.

13. The use of any one of claims 1- -12, wherein the antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof protects inhibitory neurons from degeneration.