THREE NEW COMPANIES JOIN CANCER RESEARCH UK-ABCODIA COLLABORATION TO IDENTIFY BLOOD MARKERS FOR EARLY CANCER DETECTION

December 10, 2014 - THREE NEW BIOMARKER COMPANIES have been selected to work with the Early Diagnosis Consortium, a collaboration between Cancer Research UK, its commercial arm, Cancer Research Technology, and Abcodia, a specialist company engaged in the validation of biomarkers for the early detection and screening of cancer.

The decision follows completion of a pilot phase to evaluate leading technologies for their ability to discover biomarkers that can detect cancer in its earliest stages, long before symptoms appear, when treatment is most likely to be effective. The technologies were tested against serum samples selected from a biobank of more than five million serum samples, collected from women as part of the UKCTOCS trial*, to which Abcodia has exclusive commercial access.

Based on these findings, the three companies involved will be Caprion which specialises in proteomics, Asuragen which uses next-generation sequencing to find circulating microRNAs, and the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology using its tumour auto-antibodies platform.

This next stage of the programme will focus on identifying biomarkers for colorectal, lung, oesophageal and pancreatic cancers, chosen because of the limited availability of screening tests for these cancers and patients' poor survival when diagnosed at a late stage.

Dr Julie Barnes, chief executive of Abcodia, said: "We are excited to work with these world leading companies to bring their cutting edge technology to this endeavour. The application of such technologies to biomarker discovery in longitudinal samples donated before the clinical presentation of cancer is a real innovation and has the potential to make a real difference to the field of early cancer detection."

Professor Ian Jacobs, vice president at the University of Manchester, principal investigator of UKCTOCS and one of the founders of Abcodia, said: "Cancers that are diagnosed at a later stage are much more difficult to manage, so I am delighted to see the progress that this consortium is making. The experiments aimed at identifying biomarkers that could form simple, non-invasive tests for early cancer detection represent an ideal use of the biobank developed through UKCTOCS."

Dr Keith Blundy, chief executive of Cancer Research Technology, said: “After a successful pilot, we are delighted to be able to bring additional technological capability into this collaborative effort, to add to the clinical, scientific and commercial expertise of existing partners. The biobank derived from UKCTOCS is providing us with the opportunity, through this initiative, to potentially unlock a future in which thousands of cancer cases could be detected and treated before symptoms emerge.”

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For media enquiries contact Ailsa Stevens in the Cancer Research UK\CRT press office on 020 3469 8300 or, out of hours, on 07050 264 059.

Notes to editors

***About the UKCTOCS Biobank**

UKCTOCS is the UK Collaborative Trial for Ovarian Cancer Screening. The biobank derived from this trial contains over 5,000,000 serum samples, derived from more than 200,000 initially healthy volunteers. Since recruitment, more than 27,000 individuals have been diagnosed with cancer. A subset of the cohort (50,000 individuals) has provided samples annually, making this an ideal resource for identifying biomarkers for early cancer detection and screening.

See: www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/trials/a-study-looking-at-screening-the-general-population-for-ovarian-cancer

About Abcodia

Abcodia is a specialist company engaged in developing biomarkers for the early detection of cancer. The company has developed deep expertise in the methods and technology relevant to the discovery and validation of biomarkers that can be detected well before the symptomatic presentation of cancer. Through an exclusive commercial license to the UKCTOCS biobank, the company is able to use samples from this population cohort to develop a pipeline of diagnostic products for the early detection of a range of cancers. Abcodia has received investment from Albion Ventures and UCL Business. Information about The Early Diagnosis Consortium can be found at: http://www.abcodia.com/theproject.php

For further information please see www.abcodia.com or email info@abcodia.com
For media enquiries, contact press officer Ellee Seymour on 01353 648564 or 07939 811961.

About Caprion

Caprion is the leading provider of proteomics and immune monitoring services to the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry. Its immune monitoring business unit, ImmuneCarta®, offers proprietary multiparametric flow cytometry for functional analyses of innate and adaptive immune responses. Caprion's proteomics business unit, ProteoCarta®, offers proprietary gel-free, label-free mass spectrometry (MS) for comprehensive, quantitative and robust comparative measurement of proteins across large sets of biological samples for the discovery and validation of protein biomarkers. Caprion also leverages ProteoCarta® to develop its own in-vitro diagnostic products targeting cancer, metabolic and infectious diseases. With research sites in Montreal, Canada and in Menlo Park, CA, Caprion has been providing large-scale proteomics and immune monitoring services to over 50 major pharmaceutical and biotech clients for more than 10 years. Caprion, a privately-held company, is majority owned by Chicago Growth Partners. For more information, please visit www.caprion.com

About Asuragen, Inc.

Asuragen is a molecular diagnostics company using genomics to drive better patient management in oncology and genetic diseases through best-in-class clinical testing

solutions. The company uses a breadth of technologies and scientific talent to discover, develop and commercialize diagnostic products and clinical testing services with efficiency and flexibility both internally and for our companion diagnostic partners. Today, Asuragen's products, services and technologies drive countless patient management decisions across oncology, genetic disease and other molecular testing modalities. In the future, we envision the company's development of molecular-based clinical diagnostics will help transform medicine by improving clinical outcomes and health economics. For more information, visit www.asuragen.com

About the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

The AIT is Austria's largest non-university research institute. The Molecular Diagnostics business unit focuses on biomarkers, assay development, bioinformatics and diagnostic biosensors and has several patents on biomarkers for cancer. Cancer onset and progression produces aberrantly expressed proteins generally also termed as tumour associated antigens (TAAs) which are able to act as antigens and evoke an immune response which results in the production of autoantibodies. These autoantibody profiles changes during neoplastic transformation and are able to be detected months or years before the clinical diagnosis of cancer and can therefore be used as biomarkers for the early diagnosis of cancer. The group support partners and customers in the ultimate goal of defining biomarkers for personalized medicine and early disease detection.

About Cancer Research Technology

Cancer Research Technology Limited (CRT) is a specialist commercialisation and development company, which aims to develop new discoveries in cancer research for the benefit of cancer patients. CRT works closely with leading international cancer scientists and their institutes to protect intellectual property arising from their research and to establish links with commercial partners. CRT facilitates the discovery, development and marketing of new cancer therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics and enabling technologies. CRT is wholly owned by Cancer Research UK, the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research. www.cancertechnology.co.uk

About Cancer Research UK

- Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research.
- Cancer Research UK's pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives.
- Cancer Research UK receives no government funding for its life-saving research. Every step it makes towards beating cancer relies on every pound donated.
- Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival rates in the UK double in the last forty years.
- Today, 2 in 4 people survive cancer for at least 10 years. Cancer Research UK's ambition is to accelerate progress so that 3 in 4 people will survive cancer within the next 20 years.
- Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.
- Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1022 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org. Follow us on Twitter and Facebook.