Provia Labs Forms Dental Stem Cell Quality Advisory Group to Ensure High Standards as Stem Cell Therapies Emerge

Provia Lab’s Store-A-Tooth service is committed to the highest quality in collecting and preserving dental stem cells for future therapeutic uses. The new advisory group includes experts whose various perspectives will help steer efforts for industry standards for collection, transport, processing and storage of stem cells from teeth.

Lexington, MA (PRWEB) April 27, 2011 -- Provia Laboratories, LLC announced today that it has formed a working group to advise the company on how to promote industry standards in the preservation of stem cells from teeth.

The announcement came at the start of the First International Conference on Dental and Craniofacial Stem Cells. The conference is being held April 27-29 in New York City at the New York Academy of Sciences, hosted by Columbia University’s College of Dental Medicine.

Provia Labs provides biobanking expertise and products and services for biospecimen research. In addition, Provia Labs offers dental stem cell banking through its Store-A-Tooth™ brand in the U.S. and has partnered with companies in India and several Latin American countries to provide dental stem cell preservation internationally.

“Research into dental stem cells is now a global enterprise,” said Peter Verlander, Ph.D., chief scientific officer at Provia Labs. “We believe this research will result in broad medical and dental benefits as discoveries in the laboratory lead to new therapies in everyday practice, making regenerative dentistry and medicine a standard of care.”

“As this potential becomes more apparent, we expect that many families will want to bank their children’s dental stem cells—cells that become available when baby teeth fall out or wisdom teeth are extracted. So the time is now to make sure that all facilities entrusted with preserving dental stem cell samples are operating at industry-recognized standards.”

The Quality Advisory Group will guide Provia Labs on drafting guidelines for the collection, transport, processing and storage of dental stem cells, including appropriate quality-control metrics to help ensure industry-wide uniformity in the viability and utility of these cells. The working group will also advise Provia Labs on how best to seek industry acceptance and adoption of the proposed standards.

The initial members of the working group are:

• Joseph C. Laning, Ph.D. Dr. Laning is the senior director of the Human Stem Cell Bank and Registry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He came to the medical school from ViaCell Inc., a biotechnology company focused on researching and developing adult stem cells to treat cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. He has also held research positions at Amaranth Bio Inc. and Organogenesis. Dr. Laning earned his Ph.D. in Immunology from Harvard University.
• Paul T. Sharpe, Ph.D. Dr. Sharpe is the Dickinson Professor of Craniofacial Biology and the director of research at the Dental Institute, King's College London. His research interests include molecular control of craniofacial hard-tissue morphogenesis, dental stem cells, and stem-cell-based tissue engineering of teeth and bone. He and his colleagues received the 2006 William J. Gies Award for best paper published in the Journal of Dental Research during the preceding year in the category of biomaterials and bioengineering. He holds a Ph.D. degree in biochemistry from Sheffield University.

• Peter C. Verlander, Ph.D. Dr. Verlander is a molecular geneticist with nearly 15 years of experience in human-genetics research in both academia and industry. Prior to joining Provia Labs, he was the associate director for Strategic Development at the Laboratory for Molecular Medicine within the Harvard Medical School - Partners Healthcare Center for Genetics and Genomics. He led the team that developed the first clinical test for detection of EGFR mutations predicting therapeutic response in lung adenocarcinoma. He received his Ph.D. in Microbiology from Duke University.

• Mervin Yoder, M.D. Dr. Yoder is the Richard and Pauline Klingler Professor of Pediatrics and Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry at the Indiana University School of Medicine, where he received his M.D. degree. He completed a residency program in Pediatrics and a fellowship in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and he is the co-author of a textbook on the care of critically ill newborns. His research interests have focused on the temporal and spatial emergence of hematopoietic and endothelial cells in the mouse embryo. His laboratory has helped to define endothelial progenitor cells in human subjects. He is past President of the ISEH Society for Hematology and Stem Cells.

Dr. Verlander commented, “We believe the quality of our Store-A-Tooth service is unsurpassed with respect to the methods we use to ensure proper collection, transport, processing and storage of dental stem cells.* Provia’s mission is to offer the highest quality repository for our clients – safeguarding the stem cells from their family’s teeth for potential use in the future. We nonetheless recognize that technology is always evolving, and we intend to stay at the forefront in dental stem cell preservation. We are also hopeful that the counsel of this working group will prove useful to others who endeavor to realize the potential of dental stem cells for regenerative medicine and dentistry.”

In 2000, researchers at the U.S. National Institutes of Health demonstrated that teeth are a source of stem cells, with the potential to differentiate into various specialized cell types. Stem cells from teeth have already been used in human studies to regrow jawbone and treat periodontal disease. Research into wide-ranging medical applications is early, but promising. Dental stem cells are being studied for their potential in therapies for type 1 diabetes, spinal-cord injury, heart attack and stroke, corneal damage, and neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson’s disease.

Often the donors of dental stem cells are children and teenagers, since it is an easy process to collect samples when a baby tooth is ready to fall out or a wisdom tooth needs to be extracted. The tooth should be taken out by a dental professional to keep its blood supply intact. After removing the tooth, the dentist or oral surgeon places it into a kit designed to protect the tooth during overnight transport to the cell-preservation facility. There the sample is decontaminated and tested to confirm its sterility, and the dental pulp is harvested. Quality control tests such as flow cytometry are performed to confirm that stem cell biomarkers are present in the samples. The samples are then stored at extremely low temperatures for the potential benefit of donors in future years as stem-cell therapies become more readily available.

About Provia Laboratories LLC
Provia Laboratories, LLC (www.provialabs.com) is a healthcare services company headquartered near Boston, Massachusetts which specializes in high quality biobanking (preservation of biological specimens). The company’s Store-A-Tooth™ service platform enables the collection, transport, processing, and storage of dental stem cells for potential use in future stem-cell therapies. The company advises industrial, academic, and governmental clients on matters related to the preservation of biological specimens for research and clinical use. In addition, Provia offers a variety of products for use in complex biobanking environments to improve sample logistics, security, and quality. Provia Labs is a member of ISBER, the International Society for Biological and Environmental Repositories.

*The Store-A-Tooth facility is registered by the US Food and Drug Administration and compliant with FDA guidelines pertinent to human cells and tissue products; certified under CLIA (the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments); licensed by the state health departments of New York, Massachusetts, and California; and accredited by the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB).

For more information about Store-A-Tooth dental stem cell preservation, please call 1-877-867-5753 or visit www.store-a-tooth.com.

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