



New company will benefit patients undergoing transplants for leukemias

IRICoR and CCRM partner to launch ExCellThera to produce high number of blood stem cells required for human transplants

June 15, 2015 (MONTREAL, Quebec and TORONTO, Ontario) – Patients suffering from acute myeloid leukemia (AML), who require stem cell transplantation as part of their treatment, may now benefit from a new best-in-class process that improves the viability and success of cord blood stem cell transplantation.

ExCellThera, a spin-off company launched by the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer – Commercialization of Research (IRICoR), and the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM) is based on novel proprietary intellectual property related to the expansion of stem cells developed by Dr. Guy Sauvageau at Université de Montréal's (UdeM) Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer (IRIC), and Dr. Peter Zandstra at the University of Toronto's Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering.

"We are excited to be working with CCRM to launch this new IRICoR spin-off company located in Montréal, which includes novel stem cell-expanding molecules that were initially identified and funded at IRIC via an early-stage investment from IRICoR," commented Michel Bouvier, CEO of IRICoR. "Our unique expertise in stem cell biology, coupled with a strong medicinal chemistry team has allowed us to advance this program rapidly towards the clinic. By working closely with CCRM, and combining our intellectual property, we have been able to leverage the expertise and technology of both IRICoR and CCRM to demonstrate the value of strong partnerships between Montreal and Toronto."

A Phase I and II clinical trial designed to test the ability of ExCellThera's stem cell expansion approach is slated to begin this year at the Maisonneuve-Rosemont Hospital in Montreal, and will also include Sainte-Justine Hospital and other centres in the near future. The trial will enroll up to 25 patients suffering from AML who require stem cell transplantation for the treatment of their disease.

"CCRM is thrilled to be announcing its first spin-off company and working in partnership with IRICoR," says Michael May, President and CEO of the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine. "In only four years, CCRM has already achieved an important goal to advance regenerative medicine technologies to the market to meet the needs of patients. We look forward to launching a portfolio of regenerative medicine companies in the future through similar collaborations."

Approximately 60,000 people in Canada and the United States are expected to be diagnosed with leukemia in 2015. The success rate of blood system transplantation is strongly correlated to the number of cells used, making ExCellThera's process a valuable breakthrough for clinical application. ExCellThera is also developing related gene therapy products.

About the Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine

CCRM, a Canadian not-for-profit organization funded by the Government of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence program and academic partners, supports the development of technologies that accelerate the commercialization of stem cell- and biomaterials-based technologies and therapies. A network of academics, industry and entrepreneurs, CCRM aims to translate scientific discoveries into marketable products for patients with specialized team funding and infrastructure. CCRM launched in Toronto's Discovery District on June 14, 2011. CCRM is hosted by the University of Toronto.

CCRM sources and conducts diligence on intellectual property from around the globe, performing fee-for-service and development projects with academia and industry in the areas of cell reprogramming and engineering, cell manufacturing and biomaterials. CCRM has a fully resourced, 6,000 square foot development facility used to advance technologies for out-licensing or company creation. For more information:

www.ccrm.ca

About the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer

An ultra-modern research hub and training centre located in the heart of the Université de Montréal, the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer (IRIC) was created in 2003 to shed light on the mechanisms of cancer and discover new, more effective therapies to counter this disease. IRIC operates according to a model that is unique in Canada. Its innovative approach to research has already led to discoveries that will, over the coming years, have a significant impact on the fight against cancer. For more information: www.irc.ca

About the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer — Commercialization of Research

The Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer — Commercialization of Research (IRICoR) is a not-for-profit drug discovery and commercialization centre based at the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer (IRIC) of the Université de Montréal (UdeM). IRICoR's main objective is to rapidly translate highly innovative scientific projects from IRIC, UdeM and various centres into high value novel therapies in oncology, immunology and related indications through strong partnerships with the private sector — thereby efficiently bridging the innovation translation gap between early stage academic research and industry. For more information: www.ircor.ca

About the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering

Founded in 1962, the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering (IBBME) is a unique tri-faculty graduate research unit at the University of Toronto. Supported by the Faculties of Applied Science and Engineering, Medicine, and Dentistry, IBBME comprises over 100 faculty members integrated into four research themes and encompassing over 250 graduate students. With vibrant multi- and trans-disciplinary research programs that range from stem cell bioengineering through nanotechnology, biomaterials, to assistive technologies, regenerative medicine, and clinical and rehabilitation engineering, IBBME researchers are finding innovative solutions to the world's most pressing health care challenges. For more information: www.ibbme.utoronto.ca

About the Université de Montréal

Deeply rooted in Montreal and dedicated to its international mission, the Université de Montréal is one of the top universities in the French-speaking world. Founded in 1878, the Université de Montréal today has 16 faculties and together with its two affiliated schools, HEC Montréal and École Polytechnique, constitutes the largest centre of higher education and research in Québec and one of the major centres in North America. It brings together 2,600 professors and researchers, accommodates more than 65,000 students. For more information: www.umontreal.ca

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Contacts:

Steven J. Klein
Chief Executive Officer
ExCellThera
514-402-0955 | steven.klein@ircor.ca

Stacey Johnson
Director, Communications
Centre for Commercialization of Regenerative Medicine (CCRM)
647-309-1830 | Stacey.johnson@ccrm.ca