

Press release

LEUKOCARE provides key technologies for tumour diagnosis in personalized medicine research project

Multi-national consortium receives €6 million EU grant

Munich, Germany, 03.07.2012

LEUKOCARE AG, a privately-owned company providing technologies for protein stabilization and biological surface coating, announced today that it will receive funding from the EU FP7 grant programme to participate in a four-year international research project aimed at developing a new blood apheresis device for *in vivo* trapping of circulating tumour cells.

The consortium of eleven companies, universities, and research institutes is coordinated by Leon Terstappen, Professor of Medical Cell Biophysics at the University of Twente (MIRA Institute, Netherlands) and a key opinion leader in the field of circulating tumour cells (CTCs). These cells that have detached from a primary tumour and circulate in the bloodstream play a crucial role in spreading tumour tissue around a patient's body. Currently only small numbers of CTCs can be isolated from blood sample volumes of 7.5 mL for genetic and immune phenotyping to assess the sensitivity of tumour cells towards certain therapeutics. To increase the number of CTCs, LEUKOCARE intends to develop an extracorporeal blood apheresis column to filter the patient's whole blood stream. This *in vivo* trapping will increase the sensitivity of cell counting by about 500-fold. Since the filtered blood is returned into the bloodstream, LEUKOCARE's expertise on coupling and stabilizing biomolecules on medical device surfaces is needed to ensure high quality and sterility of the new device. The harvested cells will be further characterized by other partners of the consortium.

The development project totals €9 M of which €6 M is provided by the EU grant. LEUKOCARE will receive a €810,000 contribution from the grant over a period of two years to fund its developmental research. The project is expected to return a next-generation device in about 4 years' time.

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Notes for editors:

About LEUKOCARE

LEUKOCARE is a leading provider of technologies for biological functionalization of surfaces and for stabilizing proteins to extend shelf-life and to enable terminal sterilization by irradiation or gas. As a product-focused, clinical-stage biotechnology company, LEUKOCARE uses its proprietary stabilizing postcoating technology to couple, protect and elute biofunctional molecules. LEUKOCARE can functionalize a wide variety of surfaces including implant surfaces, wound dressings, patches, stents, catheters, columns for ex-vivo blood treatment and others. LEUKOCARE leverages its comprehensive expertise in product-focused industry partnerships. The company offers its know-how in biofunctional coatings, formulation of biologics, and product development to interested parties ranging from service-based collaborations to co-development partnerships. LEUKOCARE was founded in 2003 and is headquartered in Martinsried near Munich, Germany.

For further information, please visit www.LEUKOCARE.com.

About LEUKOCARE's technology

Many biologics are prone to chemical and physical degradation as well as destabilization or unfolding in response to temperature, radiation, and hydrolysis during production, sterilization and storage. Thus, shelf life and sterilization are key bottlenecks in the design strategies and market success of new products. LEUKOCARE's Stabilizing and Protecting Solutions (SPS) are employed in the biopharmaceutical, medical device and diagnostics industries to enhance the shelf-life of proteins and to enable terminal sterilization by irradiation or Ethylene Oxide. Terminal sterilization allows for a significant reduction in production costs by avoiding complex aseptic production and at the same time, improves product safety, as most sources of error can be excluded in one single step.

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