Oxford Genome Sciences ("OGeS") and University of Oxford to develop new clinical biomarkers for colorectal cancer

OGeS joins consortium focused on the development of new personalised management of colorectal cancer

Oxford, UK, 12 April 2006 – Oxford Genome Sciences (UK) Ltd (OGeS) announced today that it has entered into collaboration with the Department of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Oxford to discover new clinical biomarkers for colorectal cancer (CRC).

The collaboration forms part of a consortium, which was initiated in 2005 with funding from GE Healthcare with the aim of developing an integrated personalised approach to the diagnosis, stratification, treatment and monitoring of CRC patients.

Over the next two years, OGeS will play an integral role in the consortium and will apply its proteomics expertise and it proprietary OGAP™ database towards two key objectives:

- To identify new approaches for the early differential diagnosis of early stage CRC patients versus late invasive stage cancer patients with liver disease and poor prognosis. If successful this differential diagnosis will lead to patients receiving the most appropriate treatment for the stage of their disease

- To identify additional protein biomarkers of recurring disease with a poor outcome that will determine if a personalised approach based on the use of novel 'targeted' agents will be more effective than standard chemotherapy treatment of CRC patients, which is effective in only a small proportion of patients. OGeS is already working with Biosite Inc. in the US to develop a new improved diagnostic for relapsing CRC based on novel biomarkers which it had previously identified using its OGAP database.

OGeS will develop this new panel of biomarkers by conducting an integrated analysis of protein profiles of blood samples from CRC patients and related genetic variations and risk factors.

"Colorectal cancer (CRC) is responsible for an estimated half a million deaths per year in the Western world alone, and the earlier it is detected the more likely we will be able to successfully treat patients," said Professor David Kerr, Rhodes Professor of Therapeutic Sciences and Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Oxford and a member of the OGeS Scientific Advisory Board. "The personalised approach to cancer therapy has already proved successful in treating certain forms of breast cancer and CRC will require similar approaches."

"CRC has become an enormous focus of drug research for big pharma," said Dr Christian Rohlff, CEO of OGeS. "Many of these new therapies target specific molecular features and pathways of CRC. OGeS being part of this important project is recognition of the increasing importance of an integrated approach across different genomics and proteomics platforms to increase our understanding of complex diseases such as CRC. Furthermore, we are privileged to be part of this consortium and excited that our expertise and technologies could be crucial as a potential source of new clinical biomarkers from which accurate and reliable

diagnostics and disease monitoring technologies could be developed. We see this deal as an important extension of our involvement in this field and it promises to provide us with additional opportunities to our current alliance with Biosite Inc. to develop a new diagnostic for relapsing CRC patients."

Colorectal Cancer
Colorectal cancer (CRC) is one of the leading causes of cancer-related morbidity and mortality, responsible for an estimated half a million deaths per year, mostly in Western, well developed countries. In these territories, CRC is the third most common malignancy (estimated number of new cases per annum in USA and EU is approximately 350,000 per year).

CRC has four distinct stages: patients with stage I disease have a five-year survival rate of >90%, while those with metastatic stage IV disease have a <5% survival rate according to the US National Institutes of Health (NIH).

As with all cancers, the earlier it is detected the more likely it can be cured, especially as pathologists have recognised that the majority of CRC tumours develop from a benign wart-like lesion, the adenoma.

Once CRC has been diagnosed, the correct treatment needs to be selected. Currently, 60 percent of colorectal cancer patients receive chemotherapy to treat their disease (NIH); however, this form of treatment only benefits a few percent of the population, while carrying with it high risks of toxicity, thus demonstrating a need to better define the patient selection criteria.

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About Oxford Genome Sciences
Oxford Genome Sciences (OGeS) is focused on the development of personalised medicines, mainly for oncology indications. The company has developed a unique integrated platform that integrates genomic, proteomic and clinical information to accelerate the discovery and validation of drug targets and biomarkers in human beings. The benefits are improved biomarkers for patient selection, drug response and efficacy monitoring, and the integration of diagnostics into drug development and product launch, thereby facilitating more accurate drug development and providing cost and time savings.

OGeS's strategy is to enter into flexible strategic alliances to capture maximum value from its unique and integrated platform for the development of new therapeutics and diagnostics in the field of cancer. In parallel, the company provides target and biomarker discovery and screening services to pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies providing OGeS with short-term revenues.

OGeS was formed in 2004 and is based near Oxford, UK.

About OGAP™
Oxford Genome Anatomy Project (OGAP) holds the world's largest proprietary collection of proteins represented by the database, which contains over one million peptide sequences from 50 tissues and 60 disease states, mapped to approximately 16,000 genes and over eight million SNPs. The database can be customised for individual partners to support and enhance their preclinical and clinical drug development activities.

OGAP® is a registered trade mark of Oxford Genome Sciences (UK) Ltd

For further information, please see www.oxfordgenomesciences.com

About Oxford-GE Consortium

The University of Oxford and GE Healthcare, a division of the General Electric Company, formed a consortium in September 2005 ("Oxford-GE Consortium") to study the pathology of colorectal cancer. The consortium is the first ever to focus on developing a comprehensive disease management programme for improved staging of the disease using both imaging and genomic pathology, targeted therapy selection and efficacy assessment, and overall-treatment monitoring. A major goal will be to create a coherent picture of a patient's disease and determine the most effective treatment.