



Daktari Achieves Milestone in Its Merck HCV Collaboration

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – January 25, 2017 – Daktari Diagnostics, a company focused on making “Anywhere. Care.™” a reality with its portable and ultrasensitive immunoassay-based CarePlatform™, today announced that it has reached a milestone in its global collaboration with Merck, known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, for the development of Daktari’s rapid point-of-care (POC) hepatitis C virus (HCV) core antigen confirmatory test system.

Daktari has successfully completed the design of the cartridge prototype suitable for commercial production, triggering a milestone payment of an undisclosed sum from Merck.

Daktari’s developmental HCV POC system is designed to provide quantitative determination of HCV viral load as a means to confirm diagnosis of an active HCV infection from samples of whole blood. It is based on a high-sensitivity measurement of the HCV core antigen and allows for a single-test approach, reducing the need for patients to undergo multiple diagnostic tests, especially in low access settings. The POC system consists of an automated instrument with an integrated reagent cartridge subsystem.

Of the approximately 130-150 million people around the world living with chronic HCV, up to 80 percent are asymptomatic after initial infection, underscoring the need for a simple, quick, cost-effective confirmatory test to aid in rapid diagnosis and help prevent further disease transmission. In 2016, the World Health Assembly, as the decision-making body of the World Health Organization, adopted the first-ever global strategy on hepatitis focused on eradicating HCV as a public health problem by reducing new infections by 90 percent by 2030¹. In the U.S., the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends HCV screening for all people born in the years 1945-1965².

About Daktari Diagnostics

Daktari Diagnostics, a privately held company based in Cambridge, Mass., is focused on developing ultrasensitive, point-of-care diagnostics that enable timely testing and access to healthcare so that patients around the world can be linked to appropriate care. Daktari’s immunoassay CarePlatform™ encompasses a proprietary diagnostic detection technology, a highly portable device, automated sample preparation with whole blood in a single-use disposable cartridge, and a wireless, cloud-based connectivity platform to allow seamless data management for enhanced clinical care. Daktari is initially developing three diagnostic products based on the CarePlatform: a high-sensitivity cardiac troponin (hs-cTnI) cardiac distress screening test, a hepatitis C virus core antigen (HCV-cAg) confirmatory test being developed in collaboration with Merck, and an HIV viral load monitoring test. The Merck Global Health Innovation Fund, a venture capital arm of Merck, is an investor in Daktari. For more information, visit www.daktaridx.com.

1. Hepatitis C Fact Sheet: World Health Organization; July 2016 <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs164/en/>
2. CDC HCV Recommended Guidelines on Testing for HCV: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; October 15, 2015 <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HCV/GuidelinesC.htm>

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