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Media Statement

WA WOMEN HELP LOCAL COMPANY FAST-TRACK GENETIC RESEARCH

PERTH, AUSTRALIA – West Australian breast cancer patients are aiding a Perth-based biotechnology company in its quest to help global researchers unlock the potential of their genetic discoveries more quickly.

The world-leading pilot study will use cutting-edge, cell-based imaging equipment – the first of its kind in Australia – to analyse tissue from more than 500 breast cancer patients whose samples form part of the WA Research Tissue Network.

The project springs out of a new collaboration between Molecular Discovery Systems (MDS), a wholly owned subsidiary of ASX-listed Perth biotech company BioPharmica Ltd (ASX: BPH), and one of the world's largest healthcare companies, GE Healthcare. Western Australian Premier Alan Carpenter announced the agreement today at an event held at the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR), home of the WA Research Tissue Network.

GE's IN Cell Analyzer imaging technology provides scientists with a way of seeing what is happening around genes, and in the process helps them to more quickly determine if the gene will be of use for new tests or treatments for diseases such as cancer and diabetes.

MDS Chief Executive Officer Dr Sam Gallagher said the technology also allowed researchers to learn more about the disease mechanisms.

"Before this type of equipment became available we could not see what was happening around the gene – it was like a black box - so being able to actually watch what's going on in real time can help us better understand how the disease operates," she said. The technology can also speed up drug screening which allows new treatments to get

"The technology can also speed up drug screening which allows new treatments to get from the laboratories to patients' bedsides faster."

Premier Alan Carpenter said the partnership was a win for WA's biotech industry.

"When a major global company such as GE Healthcare chooses to collaborate with a Perth company and a State Government-supported research institute, it's a clear illustration that WA is punching above its weight in the biotechnology sector," he said.

"This sort of partnership showcases WA's skills and services to the world market and will help us ensure science and innovation plays a key part in ensuring WA's economic growth, creating jobs and allowing economic diversification."

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WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken welcomed the alliance, which will see MDS and its WAIMR-based researchers work with GE Healthcare teams in the US, UK, Australia and Singapore.

“As WA’s premier adult medical research institute, our primary goal is to improve the health of all West Australians – by helping drive the local biotech industry’s expansion and competitiveness,” he said.

“These sorts of partnerships are only possible because WA has been successful in attracting some of the world’s top scientists.”

HLS5, a gene discovered by Professor Klinken and his team and now being commercialised by Biopharmica, would be the first gene investigated in the study.

“GE Healthcare has always placed value on developing partnerships and working with customers to achieve common objectives,” said Stephen McIntyre, President, GE Healthcare, Australia/New Zealand.

“Co-operative efforts like this one see our vast experience come into play, and ensure our advanced technology is used to support innovative, groundbreaking and necessary research projects.”

BioPharmica Director Charles Murphy agrees the collaboration will support mutual goals.

“In some areas of the collaboration one party will own intellectual property and in other areas MDS and GE Healthcare will share it. Both MDS and GE Healthcare are seeking to increase the impact of cell-based imaging on research and patient care,” he said.

“MDS will play a vital, synergistic role in BioPharmica’s investment portfolio and enhance the capacity to invest into and commercialise world-leading Australian science.”

Under the new alliance MDS will also offer consultancy services to GE Healthcare and position the WAIMR laboratories as a ‘Show Site’, a way for GE Healthcare to showcase its technologies to its Asia Pacific partners and customers.

-Background Information Follows-

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Natalie Papadopoulos, Media Consultant, Tel (08) 9388 9280; Mob 0407 984 435

Elissa Robins, Watterson Marketing Communications (GE Healthcare PR), Tel (02) 9437 6122.

GE Healthcare



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About GE Healthcare

GE Healthcare is a \$14 billion unit of GE that provides transformational medical technologies that are shaping a new age of patient care. GE Healthcare's expertise in medical imaging and information technologies, medical diagnostics, patient monitoring systems, disease research, drug discovery and biopharmaceuticals is dedicated to detecting disease earlier and tailoring treatment for individual patients. GE Healthcare offers a broad range of services to improve productivity in healthcare and enable healthcare providers to better diagnose, treat and manage patients with conditions such as cancer, Alzheimer's and cardiovascular diseases.

About Molecular Discovery Systems

Molecular Discovery Systems (MDSystems), is a wholly owned subsidiary of ASX-listed Perth biotech company BioPharmica Ltd (ASX: BPH). BioPharmica Ltd has core expertise in verification and validation of both assays and analysis. The company focuses on drug discovery with the validation of biomarkers for disease, therapy and diagnostics. The approach taken is to provide a structured approach to the validation process of biomarker discovery at the earliest stages. The development pipeline is based around kinetic imaging in high content multiplex format. Molecular Discovery Systems provides a strategy and analysis expertise that will enable the early stage research to be rapidly assessed and developed for diagnostics and therapy.

About BioPharmica

BioPharmica (ASX: BPH) is an Australian Stock Exchange listed company developing biomedical research with academic and hospital institutes. The Company provides early stage funding for a direct collaboration, a spin out company or to secure a license. BioPharmica provides product development, funding and commercial strategies, whilst the institutional partner provides a majority of the infrastructure and research expertise.

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