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April 21, 2015 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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Singapore: Singapore-based Clearbridge Biomedics has partnered with Shanghai LIDE Biotech to set up the LIDE-Clearbridge CRO CTC Hub to provide circulating tumour cell (CTC) processing services in China.

LIDE-Clearbridge CRO CTC Hub will target biotech and pharmaceutical companies, as well as hospitals, helping to accelerate their therapeutic and drug discovery research. In addition to CTC processing services, the facility provides complementary downstream analysis services, including cell enumeration,immunohistochemistry testing, fluorescence in situ hybridisation, cell culture, patientderived tumour xenograft (PDX) for drug sensitivity testing and genomic profiling using next generation sequencing.

The hub leverages upon the ClearCell FX1 system, label-free, automated CTC isolation system. Developed by Clearbridge Biomedics, the ClearCell FX is able to isolate intact and viable CTCs from a patient's blood sample.

CTCs are cells that have detached from the primary tumour and circulate in the patient's bloodstream. They are extremely rare, a millilitre of blood contains a few CTCs mixed with billions of blood cells. CTCs play a significant role in metastasis of the cancer, as the 'seeds' for the spread and growth of new tumours.

"Most patients do not die from their primary tumour, but when the disease spreads to another organ. By better understanding how CTCs lead to the metastatic spread of this disease, we will be able to develop better ways to diagnose, treat and manage cancer," said Mr Johnson Chen, managing director and founder, Clearbridge Biomedics.

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"This partnership between Clearbridge Biomedics and LIDE comes at an opportune time, as it allows us to reach out to the growing drug development market in China. Through this new partnership, we are able to support the pharmaceutical industry, which has already demonstrated significant interest using to CTC technology to empower the development of new therapeutic solutions in the fight against cancer."

"Clearbridge BioMedics' unique CTC enrichment technology will enable us to provide new real-time insights to our pharma partners and customers," said Dr Wen Danyi, CEO, LIDE Biotech. "Combined with our powerful PDX capabilities and leading downstream analysis, we can now enable comprehensive studies into metastasis biology and cancer pathogenesis; that can contribute to personalized precision medicine and timely, tailored, treatments for cancer patients."

In this partnership, Clearbridge Biomedics will be bringing technology and know-how as a leading "liquid biopsy" technology company in Asia. This will complement LIDE's world-class capabilities in patient-derived xenografts, pre-clinical testing and development services. The LIDE-Clearbridge CRO CTC Hub's integrated service solution will be a "one-stop-shop" for oncology research, therapeutic target development and biomarker validation for the cancer researcher, biotechs and pharmaceutical companies.