

Acumen, Curetis to jointly advance on biomarker panel for immune system

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Acumen, Curetis to jointly advance on biomarker panel, AcuSept



Singapore: Germany based Curetis, a developer of next-level molecular diagnostic solutions, has obtained a world-wide, non-exclusive license to AcuSept, a proprietary biomarker panel from Singapore based Acumen Research Laboratories.

The panel is in advanced clinical development and will be used by Curetis and Acumen for the joint development and clinical validation of a sepsis host response test on the Unyvero Platform.

Acumen's activities in Singapore will be supported by NUS Enterprise and the Diagnostics Development (DxD) Hub, a national initiative led by the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), which aims to accelerate diagnostics innovations into market-ready products.

Separately, Curetis and Acumen have signed an exclusive, multi-year distribution agreement for the Unyvero product line in ASEAN markets, which will initially include Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. The agreement, effective immediately, comprises Unyvero Systems and P55 and i60 ITI Application Cartridges. Acumen will seek product registration in these markets.

This agreement, through which Acumen will act as a commercial hub for Curetis in the ASEAN markets, will complement the recently announced Greater China distribution partnership between Curetis and Beijing Clear Biotech, giving Curetis a strong sales and marketing presence in Asia.

The AcuSept biomarker panel is designed to accurately detect changes in a patient's immune system indicative of pathogens in the blood stream and of a systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS) caused by these microorganisms. The presence of both SIRS and infections are the medical criteria for sepsis, a severe disease with poor prognosis and an often

fatal outcome: approximately 50 percent of people with severe sepsis and 80 percent of people with septic shock die.

With an estimated incidence of 26 million cases worldwide per year, sepsis is among the most frequent severe medical conditions and a significant economic burden to the healthcare systems. A fast and clear distinction between patients with sepsis and those who only have either infections or SIRS by appropriate tests is key to an effective therapy and survival.

"We are very impressed with Acumen's work on the AcuSept biomarker panel for sepsis host response," said Dr Oliver Schacht, CEO, Curetis. "We believe that the panel has the potential to address shortcomings of other approaches for the early detection of sepsis, and believe that a sepsis host response test on our Unyvero Platform will ideally complement our Unyvero Blood Culture test, which is currently in development."

"We are pleased to have won Acumen as an exclusive distributor of our Unyvero Platform with currently marketed Application Cartridges in pneumonia and implant and tissue infections for the ASEAN markets," added Achim Plum, chief commercial officer, Curetis. "With its in-depth understanding of the clinical needs and the healthcare systems in these markets, Acumen is optimally positioned to develop the ASEAN markets for us and help us establish an ASEAN commercial hub."

"Sepsis progresses rapidly and frequently comes with non-specific symptoms at an early stage. Accurate, quick and early diagnosis of a developing sepsis, however, is an important prerequisite for fast and effective treatment," said Dr Siew Hwa Ong, CEO, Acumen, who is also an Adjunct Professor at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. "Unyvero is ideally suited for the AcuSept sepsis host response panel to enable the early and reliable segregation of patients who have sepsis from those who have infections or inflammation only. Moreover, the distribution of Unyvero creates great synergies for us in building a market for Unyvero that can be leveraged later for the fast adoption of the AcuSept test on the Unyvero Platform. This partnership is made possible partly due to the DxH Hub's support to Acumen in refining the technical and commercial strategy for the test, as well as its continued commitment to support the subsequent clinical validation."

"We are delighted that Acumen is embarking on the next stage of its commercialization journey for its AcuSept technology," said Dr Sidney Yee, CEO, DxH Hub. "The strategic partnership between Acumen and Curetis underscores DxH Hub's role as a critical enabler for diagnostics solutions to reach the market quickly to deliver effective treatment outcomes for patients."