AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR FORGE PARTNERSHIP FOR BURNS DRUG DEVELOPMENT

An innovative drug treatment that could limit the damage caused by burns and encourage skin tissue regeneration is the focus of a new partnership between West Australian research groups headed by two Australians of the Year.

The new class of protein-based drugs, called Phylomer®, has been developed by Phylogica, the first spin out company from the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, headed by Professor Fiona Stanley.

Phylogica announced to the Australian Stock Exchange today that it has signed a development agreement with the McComb Foundation, headed by burns specialist and 2005 Australian of the Year, Clinical Professor Fiona Wood. The deal will progress the use of the cell protection Phylomers® in the treatment of burn injury.

Phylogica CEO Dr Stewart Washer said preliminary research results look promising.

"One of the major problems with burns is that the time taken to heal often leads to severe scarring. What we've seen in early experiments is that the Phylomers® seem to assist cells in reinfiltrating the burn area and to re-grow healthy tissue, reducing the time taken to heal," Dr Washer said.

"Obviously challenges remain to progress these early experiments to a stage where we can see how it assists burns patients, and that's where the collaborations with Clinical Professor Fiona Wood and the McComb Foundation will prove so valuable."

Clinical Professor Wood said she was very impressed by the potential of the Phylomer® drugs.

"We always say that the quality of the scar needs to be worth the pain of survival. Here we're talking about compounds that could potentially limit the extent of the burn injury as well as helping to reduce scarring," she said.

"It's important to remember that this project is in its early stages, but certainly we are very excited by the preliminary data and keen to explore it."

Phylomers® are a unique set of small protein fragments identified and owned by Phylogica that block the protein-protein interactions in cells that lead to disease.

Institute Director Professor Fiona Stanley said the exciting aspect of Phylomers® is their potential application in a wide range of diseases where inflammation is a factor, such as rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes and stroke.
"Like with burns, much of the damage in these types of diseases is caused by the inflammatory reaction," Professor Stanley said.

"These Phylomers® appear to be very effective molecules in blocking this secondary damage that does so much harm.--"

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PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:
Phylogica Chief Scientist Dr Paul Watt will tour the laboratories with 2005 Australian of the Year Fiona Wood and 2003 Australian of the Year Fiona Stanley at 11am, Thursday December 8, 2005.
Location: Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, 100 Roberts Rd, Subiaco

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MEDIA BACKGROUND

About Phylogica

Phylogica (ASX:PYC) (www.phylogica.com) is a drug discovery company utilizing its proprietary phylomer technology to develop a revolutionary new drug for stroke and other anti-inflammatory diseases including rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes. The Company is preparing to commercialise its lead drugs through licensing deals. Phylogica was founded by the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth (www.ichr.uwa.edu.au) and the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, United States (www.fccc.edu).

About Phylomers®

Phylomers® are stable fragments of naturally-occurring proteins with the ability to bind tightly to target proteins and inactivate them as a result. Phylomers® can be selected for activity against specific disease target proteins. The properties of Phylomers® make them attractive as cost-effective alternatives to antibodies a proven multi-billion drug class. Phylogica's proprietary Phylomer® Libraries are collections of millions of Phylomers® that represent a source of drug leads which can be used for multiple diseases.

About McComb Foundation

The McComb Foundation is a research-based organisation that was established in 1999 to conduct research into tissue engineering. The foundation research is of international standard, and has led to the development of novel burn therapeutics, such as skin replacement products, which have been already successfully commercialised. In addition to scientific research, the McComb Foundation actively participates in overseas burn education and supports the treatment of less-advantaged patients from poorer nations.

About Telethon Institute for Child Health Research

The Telethon Institute for child Health Research was founded in Perth in 1990 and has forged an international reputation with its multidisciplinary approach to major childhood diseases and issues. The Institute has a strong focus on prevention and the translation of research into action.