

Press Release

Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRI) and Siam Life Science (SLS) Develop New Gold Standard for Pharmacological and Toxicological Test Systems

*Siam Life Science Secures Exclusive License For Unique Liver Cell Line From Premier
U.S. Research Organization, Walter Reed Army Institute Of Research*

21 May 2008, BANGKOK, Thailand – A breakthrough technology in the form of a unique, functional human liver cell line has the potential to become the new worldwide gold standard for preclinical drug evaluation studies. The cell line, licensed by Thailand-based human cell technology company, Siam Life Science Ltd. (SLS), was developed in Thailand at the Armed Forces Research Institute of the Medical Sciences (AFRIMS). The AFRIMS is a foreign activity of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) which is the largest and most diverse biomedical research laboratory in the United States' Department of Defense.

Developed under a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA), this unique human liver cell line is licensed to SLS on a worldwide basis and includes the exclusive right for SLS to sublicense the technology for certain uses to external partners. Known as HC-04, it is an immortalized cell line that can continue to grow and divide indefinitely *in vitro*. Unlike other immortalized liver cell lines, HC-04 was developed from normal human liver tissue without genetically manipulating the liver cells. More importantly, HC-04 has been shown to retain most of its normal liver cell functions and is therefore ideally suited for preclinical drug evaluation and drug safety studies. SLS was granted exclusive rights to these uses under the license with the Army.

The HC-04 cell line can be used for research and drug development for treating Malaria and Hepatitis. Use of HC-04 in malaria drug development is especially attractive because the cell line can support the *in vitro* development of two major Malaria parasites, *Plasmodium falciparum* and *Plasmodium vivax*. HC-04 cells may also be used in the development of bio-artificial liver devices and SLS was granted license rights to these uses as well.

SLS intends to make the HC-04 cell line available to the global pharmaceutical industry for toxicological and pharmacological testing as well as drug development. "There is a worldwide shortage of functional human liver cell test systems for preclinical drug evaluation studies," said Walter Beerheide, PhD, CEO of SLS. "Most human liver cell lines currently on the market are not suitable for such studies, because they lose much of their normal liver cell characteristics. Our cell line addresses this and provides a reliable, stable and reproducible model for drug toxicology studies. It has the potential to become a gold standard among pharmacological and toxicological test systems for the pharma and life science industry. This latest development will contribute towards our goal of becoming an internationally-competitive human cell technology company."

About Siam Life Science Ltd.

Siam Life Science Ltd. is a Thailand-based biotechnology company that focuses on developing and commercialising human cell-based technologies and products. Its current product portfolio includes primary and immortalized human liver cells for the pharma and biotech industry. In addition, it is also developing cell-based technologies including in-vitro toxicology and pre-clinical drug testing platforms, screening tools for Malaria and Hepatitis, and bio-artificial liver devices.

About Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

AFRIMS is a special foreign activity of WRAIR and part of the US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. The mission of the US Army Medical Component of the Armed Forces Research Institute of the Medical Sciences (USAMC-AFRIMS) is to conduct basic and applied research for development of diagnostic tests, drugs and vaccines for infectious diseases of military importance.

WRAIR's mission is twofold: To conduct biomedical research that is responsive to Department of Defense and U.S. Army requirements and to deliver life saving products including knowledge, technology, and medical materiel that sustain the combat effectiveness of the warfighter.

WRAIR's focus on research for the soldiers affects all aspects of its operations because military medical research priorities differ from those of the civilian sector. Despite its focus on the military, WRAIR's research has been used to solve non-military medical problems around the world.

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