

Press Release

TcLand Expression initiates major partnership with the *Hospital Vall d'Hebron Research Institute* and gets exclusive rights on key intellectual property in the field of novel biomarkers in rheumatoid arthritis

Nantes (France) and Barcelona (Spain), June 29, 2010 - [TcLand Expression](#), a global leader in the field of gene expression biomarkers and companion diagnostics in allo- and auto-immunity, today announced that it has entered a strategic partnership with the *Hospital Vall d'Hebron Research Institute, VHIR*, (Barcelona, Spain) on the development of new biomarkers for predicting the response to biologics in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). TcLand Expression is granted with an exclusive and worldwide access to VHIR's intellectual property covering biomarker predicting response to TNFa blockers in RA.

The partnership is founded on the expertise of rheumatologist, Dr Sara Marsal, Director of the *Grup de Recerca de Reumatologia, Hospital Universitari Vall d'Hebron Institut de Recerca (VHIR)* in Barcelona. Sara Marsal's work has been recently highlighted in a landmark article describing the study which led to the discovery of a gene expression signature predicting response to RA patients treated with TNFa blockers (Julià *et al.*, PLoS One. 2009 Oct 22;4(10):e7556).

This partnership will strengthen TcLand Expression industrial position in the field of biomarkers for autoimmune diseases.

"Personalized Medicine is becoming a reality in many diseases including autoimmune disorders like Rheumatoid Arthritis. New genomic tools are empowering us to discover molecular patterns that are associated with pathological processes and, in some cases, can be useful predictive tools. We are really proud to start this collaboration with TcLand Expression in the development of a predictor tool for the response to anti-TNF alpha treatment in RA. We are sure that with this powerful alliance and their experience in developing biomarkers we will reach the ultimate goal of personalizing this treatment in RA. This predictor system will reduce the socioeconomic cost associated with these expensive therapies and, above all, will improve the quality of life of RA patients", stated Dr. Sara Marsal.

About rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is the most common severe type of inflammatory arthritis. It affects young individuals, with a greater prevalence in women. Given that the chronic inflammation in RA leads to joint destruction and cardiovascular damage, this disease constitutes a major public health concern. Despite significant progress in the treatment of RA over the last 10 years, many patients only respond partially and true remission is only achieved in a small proportion of cases. Joint destruction cannot be halted in all patients and the repair of existing damage (let alone a cure) is still an unattainable goal. Furthermore, some patients have to stop treatment because of toxicity and adverse events. The ability to predict the response to a treatment prior to its initiation would constitute a major step forward and would optimize patient care, reduce the risk of adverse events and substantially reduce healthcare costs.

About Vall d'Hebron Institut de Recerca

Vall d'Hebron Institut de Recerca (VHIR) coordinates the research activity of the Hospital Universitari Vall d'Hebron, and is one of the leaders of the biomedical research in Spain. It's inside the leading hospital complex in Catalonia and one of the largest in Spain, with more 7.000 professionals and more than 1.400 beds. It's comprised of four large centers - the General Area, the Maternity and Children's Area, the Traumatology and Rehabilitation Area and the Outpatient Surgery Unit (Pere Virgili Health Care Park) - which cover almost all the medical and surgical specialties.

For more information, please visit our website: www.ir.vhebron.net

About TcLand Expression

TcLand Expression is an acknowledged pioneer in the discovery, the development and the validation of gene expression biomarkers for unmet medical needs in transplantation and auto-immune disease. The company benefits from an exceptional scientific and clinical environment.

For more information, please visit our website: www.tcland-expression.com

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