



Company Epistem Plc
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Headline Tuberculosis diagnostic collaboration
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Epistem Plc
("Epistem" or "the Company")

Tuberculosis diagnostic collaboration

Epistem (London AIM: EHP), the biotechnology and personalised medicine company, is pleased to announce today the formation of a Tuberculosis (TB) diagnostic collaboration with Xcelris Laboratories, one of India's leading Genomics research and Diagnostic testing companies. Epistem and Xcelris will be evaluating Epistem's Genedrive™ molecular device as part of India's RNTCP (Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme) which started in 1997 and since 2006 has covered the whole of India to ensure the rapid diagnosis and treatment of TB sufferers.

India has the largest number of TB sufferers in the world, more than twice the number in China, which has the second highest infection rate. According to the World Health Organisation, every year 2 million new patients in India develop TB of which roughly half a million cases are fatal with the highest incidence occurring in remote rural areas.

Genedrive™ enables a major advance in molecular diagnostic testing by providing a rapid (less than 30 minutes), low cost, simple to use device with high sensitivity and specificity. Genedrive™ will be targeted at identifying TB infection at an early stage, and given its size and capabilities lends itself to use in remote locations. Positioned as a handheld 'consumable' device, Genedrive brings a new 'Point of Need' approach to diagnostic testing across a broad spectrum of infectious diseases such as TB, Dengue and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's).

The TB evaluation programme with Xcelris will continue through 2011, following which it is anticipated that it will be rolled out into a select number of remote locations prior to a full evaluation of market positioning.

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Notes for editors

Epistem is a biotechnology company commercialising its expertise in epithelial stem cells in the areas of oncology, gastrointestinal and dermatological diseases. Epistem develops innovative therapeutics, biomarkers and diagnostics alongside providing contract research services to drug development companies. The Group's core expertise is focused on the regulation of adult stem cells located in epithelial tissue, which includes the gastrointestinal tract, skin, hair follicles, breast and prostate.

Xcelris is one of India's leading Genomics research and diagnostic testing company having expertise in Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) technology and novel diagnostic molecular diagnostic techniques. Xcelris offers Genomics and bioinformatics services to over 150 major research institutions and companies in India and abroad and participates in collaborative research with various bodies. With a focus on cutting-edge technology in the bioscience domain, Xcelris will partner with the Revised National TB Control Program (RNTCP) in India to offer innovative and easy-to-use diagnostic solutions to aid the TB prevention and treatment effort in India.