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NEWS

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PAI Life Science's Biochemistry Expertise Links with Hemex Health's Gazelle™ Miniaturized Rapid Diagnostic Platform to Develop Pandemic Test

Two Pacific Northwest Companies Partner to Develop Affordable COVID-19 Six Minute Diagnostic Test for Use in Low Resourced Countries

[Seattle/Portland, Ore. April 15, 2020] Researchers in Seattle and Portland have agreed to collaborate on an urgently needed rapid COVID-19 diagnostic test that can diagnose patients accurately, quickly, and inexpensively, anywhere in the world. The platform behind the rapid COVID-19 test is designed to work in low resourced locations from Mumbai to Mogadishu, and remote villages in between. Researchers expect to have the device ready for a clinical study within a few months.

Once developed and necessary approvals are obtained, the affordable technology will be used for early detection of cases of COVID-19 to help health workers stop the spread of the disease on short notice.

The COVID-19 diagnostic uses Portland-based Hemex Health's Gazelle Diagnostic platform that combines known and trusted testing with cloud-based reporting, in a reader smaller than a shoebox, battery powered, and chargeable with a cell phone charger. Gazelle combines miniaturized electrophoresis with automation and a video interface for rapid, easy, and consistent reading. Significantly, Gazelle eliminates the need for cold-chain necessary with many diagnostic technologies but difficult to maintain in tropical climates.

Because new viruses may arise anywhere at any time, researchers have long sought a diagnostic platform that can be deployed worldwide, used with little training, that would communicate data in real time. Gazelle allows for low-cost testing suitable for use in local health clinics, small labs, doctor's offices, field hospitals, and emergency situations.

"When it comes to viruses, our world knows no boundaries," said Patti White, CEO, Hemex Health. "Health care workers and global health experts urgently want an affordable, easy to operate diagnostic platform that connects even the most remote village with public health so that new outbreaks can be identified quickly.

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“The Gazelle platform combines artificial intelligence, cloud-based data reporting, and miniaturized proven diagnostic technologies that will revolutionize diagnostics the way smart phones changed communications,” said White.

“We need COVID-19 diagnostics like Gazelle that can be used broadly in under resourced countries, to eliminate transmission there and to remove the constant threat of re-introduction elsewhere,” said David Bell, PhD, former World Health Organization scientist who developed and tested diagnostics implementation and training guidance used internationally by Ministries of Health around the world. “The Gazelle platform provides integration of rapid, low cost testing with connectivity and digital integration fundamental to future surveillance programs around the world.”

While Hemex Health engineered the intelligent reader and cartridge, Seattle-based PAI Life Sciences is developing the biochemical assay required to accurately detect a protein on the surface of COVID-19. PAI has identified an antigen-based mechanism that recognizes the shed protein of the COVID virus.

“We are using a highly specific technology to recognize shed proteins from the virus that causes COVID-19.” said Darrick Carter, PhD, President and CEO, PAI Life Sciences and Affiliate Professor, Global Health, University of Washington. “This unique approach should be more sensitive than antibody-based tests so it can identify even trace viral presence.”

PAI Life Sciences developed the first point of care diagnostic screening tool for leprosy and is collaborating on an innovative vaccine for COVID-19 to begin human clinical trials soon.

About Hemex Health

Hemex Health develops and commercializes diagnostic technologies that help make affordable life-sustaining medical care possible for people everywhere. Hemex products are designed to be easy to use and to provide benefit quickly and effectively for the healthcare worker and patient at the point-of-need. The company targets global locations with elimination goals for some of the world’s most deadly diseases, including COVID-19, malaria and large populations at risk for sickle cell disease. The Gazelle technology was developed in collaboration with Case Western Reserve University. Hemex Health is headquartered at the OTRADI Bioscience Incubator located in Portland, Oregon. More information can be found by going to www.hemexhealth.com.

About PAI Life Sciences

PAI Life Sciences is a biotechnology company located in Seattle, WA, specialized in the developmental and translational research necessary to bring products from the laboratory to bedside. The company focuses on antigens for diagnostics and vaccines. It has developed novel protein biotherapeutics and has a pipeline of products ranging from infectious disease vaccines and adjuvants to therapeutics for cancer.