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Sage Bionetworks Launches International Neurobiology Partnerships

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SEATTLE, WA Sage Bionetworks has begun projects to build advanced computational models of neurobiological disease through ongoing partnerships with CHDI Foundation and Takeda Pharmaceutical Company. Analyses and the resulting models will be deposited in the Sage Bionetworks repository and will be valuable public resources available to all interested researchers.

Huntington's Disease

CHDI Foundation is continuing its relationship with Sage Bionetworks through a project to apply advanced computational modeling to the discovery and development of biomarkers and therapies for Huntington's disease (HD). Initially, Sage Bionetworks and CHDI will work with Massachusetts General Hospital colleagues to conduct a worldwide inventory of HD tissues available for research purposes. The intention is to analyze these materials using computational genomics to identify key genes in disease progression and assess the validity of model HD systems.

"Even though HD is caused by mutations in a single gene, there are unexplained variations in disease onset and progression," explained Jonathan Derry PhD, Project Leader and Vice President of Research at Sage Bionetworks. "We believe that genomic network analysis that uses both genetic and phenotypic data will help identify the factors underlying this complexity and provide insights into new models and therapies for the disease."

"We think that network modeling approaches have great potential to further our understanding of Huntington's disease. A better appreciation of how mutant Huntington genes drive disease pathology is necessary to accelerate the search for therapies," said Robi Blumenstein, President of CHDI Management. "We are particularly excited to bring HD to Sage Bionetworks' open-access infrastructure. This shared platform will allow investigators to freely build and compare their network models using Sage Bionetworks' sophisticated tools, to the benefit of the entire HD research community."

Central Nervous System Disease

Takeda Pharmaceutical Company and Sage Bionetworks recently began a four-year research alliance that will focus on discovering effective therapeutic targets for central nervous system (CNS) disease. Using its integrated genomics methods, Sage Bionetworks scientists will build predictive computational models and identify key regulatory genes and predictive biomarkers in patients with CNS diseases including schizophrenia. Scientists at the two companies will then collaborate to discover and prioritize the targets holding the greatest potential for molecular intervention. Under the terms of the agreement, Takeda will provide more than \$3.6 million over four years in research funding and fees.

"We excited about the great synergy between Sage Bionetworks' network biology technology and Takeda's proven expertise in pharmaceutical research and development," said Dr. Stephen Friend, President of Sage Bionetworks. "We believe this project, which is our first in central nervous system area, creates an opportunity for new therapeutic insights."

“Sage Bionetworks’ leading-edge technology and world-wide reach offers the potential for Takeda to understand currently unknown disease mechanisms. This represents a key strategy for meeting Takeda’s challenge for innovation,” said Dr. Paul Chapman, General Manager, Head of Pharmaceutical Research Division of Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited. “We view this collaboration as an opportunity to further Takeda’s goal of identifying targets for new therapeutics to treat the serious effects of CNS diseases where there is a high unmet need for patients all over the world.

About Sage Bionetworks

Sage Bionetworks is a nonprofit biomedical research organization creating a new paradigm for addressing the complexity of human biological information and the treatment of disease. Sage Bionetworks and its academic and commercial partners employ global coherent molecular and clinical datasets to create validated disease models that improve the speed and efficiency of therapeutic drug development. Sage’s vision is to create an open access, integrative bionetwork evolved by contributor scientists working to eliminate human disease: www.sagebase.org.

About CHDI Foundation, Inc.

CHDI Foundation, Inc. is a privately-funded, not-for-profit, biomedical research organization that is exclusively dedicated to rapidly discovering and developing therapies that slow the progression of Huntington’s disease (HD). As a collaborative enabler, CHDI seeks to bring the right partners together to identify and address critical scientific issues and move drug candidates to clinical evaluation as quickly as possible. Our scientists work closely with a network of more than 600 researchers in academic and industrial laboratories around the world in the pursuit of these novel therapies, providing project management to ensure that our common goals remain in focus. More information about CHDI can be found at www.chdifoundation.org.

About Takeda

Located in Osaka, Japan, Takeda is a research-based global company with its main focus on pharmaceuticals. As the largest pharmaceutical company in Japan and one of the global leaders of the industry, Takeda is committed to strive toward better health for patients worldwide through leading innovation in medicine. Additional information about Takeda is available through its corporate website, <http://www.takeda.com>.