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Vericel Completes Patient Enrollment in Phase 2b ixCELL-DCM Clinical Study of Ixmyelocel-T

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Jan. 29, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Vericel Corporation (Nasdaq:VCEL), a leading developer of patient-specific expanded cellular therapies for the treatment of severe diseases and conditions, today announced the completion of patient enrollment in the company's Phase 2b ixCELL-DCM clinical trial evaluating ixmyelocel-T for the treatment of advanced heart failure due to ischemic dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM). Top-line results from this study are expected around the end of the first quarter of 2016.

"The ixCELL-DCM study is progressing on schedule and should generate valuable new information about the clinical potential of ixmyelocel-T to treat patients who suffer from advanced heart failure due to ischemic DCM," said David Recker, MD, Vericel's chief medical officer. "We congratulate our clinical investigators on reaching this milestone and thank our study participants, the ixCELL-DCM study steering committee and the independent data and safety monitoring board for their support and commitment to this important research program."

About Dilated Cardiomyopathy

Dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), a progressive disease of the heart, is a leading cause of heart failure and heart transplantation. DCM is characterized by weakening of the heart muscle and enlargement of the heart chambers, leading to systolic abnormalities (difficulty of the left ventricle to pump blood). Heart enlargement and poor function generally lead to progressive heart failure with further decline in the ability of the heart to pump blood efficiently throughout the body.

About Ixmyelocel-T

Ixmyelocel-T is a patient-specific, expanded multicellular therapy manufactured from the patient's own bone marrow using Vericel's proprietary, highly automated, fully closed cell-processing system. This process selectively expands the population of mesenchymal stromal cells and alternatively activated macrophages, which are responsible for production of anti-inflammatory and pro-angiogenic factors known to be important for repair of damaged tissue. Ixmyelocel-T has been designated an orphan drug by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in the treatment of DCM.

About Vericel Corporation

Vericel Corporation (formerly Aastrom Biosciences, Inc.) is a leader in developing patient-specific expanded cellular therapies for use in the treatment of patients with severe diseases and conditions. The company markets two autologous cell therapy products in the United States: Carticel® (autologous cultured chondrocytes), an autologous chondrocyte implant for the treatment of cartilage defects in the knee, and Epicel® (cultured epidermal autografts), a permanent skin replacement for the treatment of patients with deep-dermal or full-thickness burns comprising greater than or equal to 30 percent of total body surface area. Vericel is also developing MACI™, a third-generation autologous chondrocyte implant for the treatment of cartilage defects in the knee, and ixmyelocel-T, a patient-specific multicellular therapy for the treatment of advanced heart failure due to ischemic dilated cardiomyopathy. For more information, please visit the company's website at www.vcel.com.

This document contains forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements concerning anticipated progress, objectives and expectations often, but not always, made through the use of words or phrases such as "anticipates," "intends," "estimates," "plans," "expects," "we believe," "we intend," and similar words or phrases, or future or conditional verbs such as "will," "would," "should," "potential," "could," "may," or similar expressions. Actual results may differ significantly from the expectations contained in the forward-looking statements. Among the factors that may result in differences are the inherent uncertainties associated with competitive developments, integration of the acquired business, clinical trial and product development activities, regulatory approval requirements, the availability and allocation of resources among different potential uses, estimating the commercial potential of our products and product candidates and growth in revenues, market demand for our products, and our ability to supply or meet customer demand for our products. These and other significant factors are discussed in greater detail in Vericel's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2013, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") on March 13, 2014, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other filings with the SEC. These forward-looking statements reflect management's current views and Vericel does not undertake to update any of these forward-looking statements to reflect a change in its views or events or circumstances that occur after the date of this release except as required by law.

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