

Genea, Merck and Illumina form the Global Fertility Alliance for excellence in Assisted Reproductive Treatment (ART)

SYDNEY, 8 June 2015: Australian fertility pioneer Genea today announced the formation of the Global Fertility Alliance, a new collaboration to advance excellence in fertility technologies and processes within the assisted reproductive treatment (ART) laboratory.

The alliance is a partnership between Genea, Merck Serono, the biopharmaceutical business of Merck, and Illumina, a leader in developing and commercialising systems for analysis of genetic variation and function.

The Alliance aims to improve the consistency in ART worldwide and addresses the need for more standardisation of fertility processes within the ART laboratory. The three companies will launch their initiative at the 31st Annual Meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) in Lisbon, Portugal, on 13 June 2015. This is another important step for Genea towards establishing global standards in the growing market of fertility technologies and the ultimate goal of helping families to have a baby.

“Increasing success rates for patients worldwide and advancing the science of fertility treatment is an integral part of our mission,” Genea Chief Executive Officer Dr Tomas Stojanov said.

“The new Global Fertility Alliance for excellence in ART will drive automation and standardisation in the field and support health care professionals in providing their patients with the best possible outcomes.”

With the establishment of the alliance, Genea, Merck Serono and Illumina emphasise their desire to help improve fertility outcomes by contributing to the standardization of technologies and protocols in ART laboratories. Currently, variation in practices and techniques can lead to inconsistent results and outcomes. Recognising the importance of innovation in ART technologies, the alliance aims to enhance progress and innovation in three ways:

- Firstly, the founding members aim to foster integration of multiple, leading fertility technologies;
- Secondly, building on this, the alliance will aim to collaborate with leading health care professionals and medical societies to develop global standards; and
- Finally, as technologies in the fertility space are rapidly advancing, the alliance will also develop educational resources for health care professionals worldwide. These efforts will include training curricula and workshops as well as access to model laboratories, symposia and events at medical meetings.

“We are the global leader in the field of fertility drugs and committed to supporting the success and improvement in ART by going beyond drugs with innovative technologies,” Merck Serono Head of Global Strategy and Franchises Meeta Gulyani said.

“By forging the Global Fertility Alliance with partners like Genea and Illumina, we aim to support the development of needed global standards in ART labs. This will ensure a consistently high level of performance between different centres and countries.”

Illumina’s SVP and GM of Reproductive and Genetic Health, Tristan Orpin, also highlighted the significance of the alliance for the reproductive biology community: “Illumina has a strong commitment to improving in vitro fertilization (IVF) outcomes through the use of industry leading genomics but appreciates that there are many factors that impact ART outcomes”.

“Founding the Global Fertility Alliance together with Merck Serono and Genea represents an exciting opportunity for us to share our knowledge and experience with the wider community and to help bring alignment and higher consistency to ART practices worldwide. Having already partnered with Merck Serono in other treatment areas, we are confident this collaboration of innovators in the fertility field will deliver a significant positive impact for health care professionals, fertility labs, and most importantly their patients,” Mr Orpin said.

In order to rapidly progress the initiative, Merck Serono, Illumina and Genea will actively contribute to the alliance and establish a board of representatives, which will meet regularly. At the same time, the companies invite new members, who demonstrate a

consistent commitment to driving technology innovation and improving ART results, to join the alliance.

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BACKGROUND

About Genea

Genea is a fertility pioneer, researching, developing and introducing breakthrough techniques and technologies in assisted reproductive treatment for almost 30 years. The group is responsible for advances in fertility treatment which virtually doubled IVF success rates in the mid-nineties and continues to improve outcomes today through innovative and world first discoveries and technologies. Genea is a strongly interconnected group of three companies:

Genea Fertility has clinics across Australia, as well as in New Zealand and Thailand and offers patients a 40 per cent greater chance of taking home a healthy baby compared to the average of all other Australian and New Zealand clinics combined*.

Genea Biomedx creates and manufactures practical, accessible and precise fertility technologies that help standardise and automate fertility treatment. Its unique relationship with Genea Fertility means that Genea Biomedx is a manufacturer that truly understands the customers' perspective. As a result Genea Biomedx has developed the world's first automated vitrification instrument, and has other projects well advanced in the product pipeline.

Genea Biocells develops unique disease-specific and unaffected human pluripotent stem cell platforms, differentiated cells, including the first robust skeletal muscle differentiation platform; culture media and small molecule libraries for use in research, drug development and cell therapy. Genea Biocells partners with scientists in industry and academia to advance innovative projects using chemical biology and stem cell-driven approaches.

*According to age-standardised analysis of the latest available data (2012) released November 2014 from the Australian and New Zealand Assisted Reproduction Database (ANZARD) and based on live births per embryo transfer for women using their own eggs.

About Merck Serono

Merck Serono is the biopharmaceutical business of Merck. With headquarters in Darmstadt, Germany, Merck Serono offers leading brands in 150 countries to help patients with cancer, multiple sclerosis, infertility, endocrine and metabolic disorders as well as cardiovascular diseases. In the United States and Canada, EMD Serono operates as a separately incorporated subsidiary of Merck Serono.

Merck Serono discovers, develops, manufactures and markets prescription medicines of both chemical and biological origin in specialist indications. We have an enduring commitment to deliver novel therapies in our core focus areas of neurology, oncology, immuno-oncology and immunology.

For more information, please visit www.merckserono.com.

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Merck is a leading company for innovative and top-quality high-tech products in healthcare, life science and performance materials. The company has six businesses - Merck Serono, Consumer Health, Allergopharma, Biosimilars, Merck Millipore and Performance Materials - and generated sales of around € 11.3 billion in 2014. Around 39,000 Merck employees work in 66 countries to improve the quality of life for patients, to foster the success of customers and to help meet global challenges. Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company - since 1668, the company has stood for innovation, business success and responsible entrepreneurship. Holding an approximately 70% interest, the founding family remains the majority owner of the company to this day. Merck, Darmstadt, Germany, holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are Canada and the United States, where the company operates as EMD Serono, EMD Millipore and EMD Performance Materials.

About Illumina

Illumina is improving human health by unlocking the power of the genome. Our focus on innovation has established us as the global leader in DNA sequencing and array-based technologies, serving customers in the research, clinical and applied markets. Our products are used for applications in the life sciences, oncology, reproductive health, agriculture and other emerging segments. To learn more, visit www.illumina.com and follow @illumina.