

Michigan Firm Rolls out DNA Testing to Help Drug Inventors, Makers Get to Market

ANN ARBOR, Mich., Dec 10, 2008 -- Michigan Technology and Research Institute (MITRI) today announced the launch of their DNA testing for human clinical trials, with an emphasis on inflammatory diseases and mechanistic studies of adverse drug reactions.

Using DNA-based methods to identify clinically-important variations in coding for immune cell proteins (cytokines), MITRI will enhance new drug development in the rapidly growing areas of arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, and autoimmune disease. "We are excited to offer this high-quality genotyping support to Discovery, Safety, and Clinical groups, explained Dr. Michael Bleavins, a founder of MITRI. "Integrating genetic markers into drug development programs allows for earlier and more confident decision making, particularly for drugs in new therapeutic areas or with novel therapeutic modalities."

Genetic testing is an important tool for characterizing disease, identifying patients likely to respond to therapy, and protecting those individuals who may be at higher risk of a serious adverse drug reaction. This approach, sometimes referred to as "Personalized Medicine", is reshaping medical practice and post-approval safety monitoring of drugs. In addition to the cytokine tests, MITRI offers genetic testing for cellular receptors, growth factors, and enzymes important in cancer, aging, and renal disease.

Dr. Bleavins indicated that the polymorphisms in vascular endothelial growth factor, matrix metalloproteinases, and tissue inhibitor of metalloproteinase-1 have applications in mechanistic studies of skin remodeling and tumor metastasis, important areas for intervention as the US population ages. To complement genetic assessments, MITRI also has antibody-based methods for quantitatively measuring many of these same cytokines to determine altered production and concentrations in the circulation.

MITRI is a privately held integrated pharmaceutical expediting organization offering genetic testing, biomarker services, and expert consulting in pharmaceutical development. The Institute is designed to improve decision making and optimize strategies that facilitate identification of high-potential drug molecules. MITRI provides tools, ideas, and laboratory support to help clients pick the most promising new drug candidates and focus on their potential as patient therapies. MITRI offers strategic drug development options, alternative IND approaches, design and oversight of pre-clinical safety testing programs, project management, and assembly of research and global registration documents. Additional information is available at www.MITRIInstitute.com or by calling Dr. Bleavins at 734.222.0013.