

December 2014 Newsletter

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First Patient Begins Unprecedented CIRM-Funded Diabetes Trial



On October 29th, ViaCyte, Inc. announced that the first patient in its CIRM-funded Phase 1/2 clinical trial had been successfully implanted with the company's type 1 diabetes investigational therapy, VC-01™, a thin plastic pouch that contains embryonic stem cell-derived pancreatic cells. When the device is implanted under the skin the cells in the pouch sense blood sugar levels and secrete insulin and other hormones to restore blood sugar to healthy levels. The porous pouch allows the cells to secrete out the hormones but protects the cells from the patient's own immune system. ViaCyte expects to enroll forty type 1 diabetics for this initial trial.

- [Read our blog about ViaCyte's announcement](#)
- [Read ViaCyte's press release](#)

CIRM 2.0: Saving Time Saves Lives

At the October 23rd governing Board meeting, President and CEO C. Randal Mills unveiled CIRM 2.0, a new effort by the agency to shorten the time required to apply for and receive CIRM funding. The new scheme provides a monthly application window (rather than every 12-18 months) for clinical trial stage projects. This new timeline will trim the application process from two years to three months. By enabling the research teams to apply when their projects are ready, CIRM 2.0 aims to not only accelerate the path to clinical trials but to also foster high quality applications. The first phase of CIRM 2.0 is expected to be launched January 1, 2015.

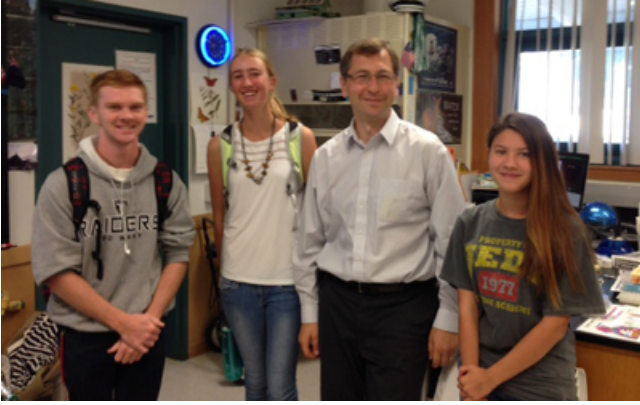
- [Read our blog and press release about the rollout of CIRM 2.0](#)

CIRM Board Awards \$24M to Form Three Stem Cell Clinical Trial Centers

CIRM's governing Board voted at its October 23rd meeting to award \$24 million to set up three new clinical trial centers. The awards, part of the CIRM's Alpha Stem Cell Clinics program, are to create one-stop centers for clinical trials enabling patients to have safe, fast and easy access to life-saving or life-changing stem cell therapies. Awards of \$8 million each will go to the City of Hope, the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of California, San Diego. The clinics will be centers of excellence that will not only have the clinical and regulatory expertise needed to deliver what, in many cases, will be the first-in-human clinical trials, but will also have the trained personnel, state of the art facilities and the support, patient care coordination and long-term follow-up that these therapies need.

- [Read our press release about the Alpha Stem Cell Clinic awards](#)

CIRM-Funded Scientists Visit Classrooms to Celebrate International Stem Cell Awareness Day



October 8th marked the sixth annual Stem Cell Awareness Day with classroom lectures, tours of stem cell facilities, and other special activities around the world. Researchers funded by CIRM at universities and companies up and down the state of California visited classrooms where the teachers had requested a guest lecture. More than 2,000 students that day got the opportunity to learn about stem cell research from one of these guest scientists. In the photo above, CIRM grantee Fyodor Urnov (2nd from the right) of Sangamo Bioscience Inc. poses with three biotech and AP biology students in Barbara Denny's classroom at Miramonte High School in Orinda, California).

- Read our blog about Stem Cell Awareness Day
- Browse a list of Stem Cell Awareness Day events that took place in California and the world

The Latest Publications on CIRM-funded Research

CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the fundamentals of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here are examples of CIRM-funded research that was published in October along with press releases from the grantees' home institutions and entries from the Stem Cellar, CIRM's official blog:

October 16th - *Tissue Engineering Part A*

- Children's Hospital - Los Angeles Release: First Step: From Human Cells to Tissue-Engineered Esophagus
- CIRM Blog: CIRM-Funded Scientists Make New Progress Toward Engineering a Human Esophagus

Upcoming CIRM Events

Nov 1st: 11am-4pm: Bay Area Science Festival - Discovery Days at AT&T Park



Bring the family to AT&T Park for some hands-on science fun at the Bay Area Science Festival. Last year more than 30,000 people enjoyed the 150+ interactive exhibits. CIRM's booth will have some stem cell-related activities for the kiddos and our staff will be on hand to answer any questions about the agency and stem cell research.

Nov 6th-7th: The World Alliance Forum is holding its conference, "The Impact of Regenerative Medicine in 2014", at the UCSF Mission

Bay Conference Center in San Francisco. CIRM's governing Board Chair, Jonathan Thomas, will be a speaker as will several CIRM grantees. CIRM newsletter subscribers may request a 20% discount on registration at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wafsf-2014-tickets-12127592957> using code "CIRM".

Dec 11th: The CIRM governing Board will hold its last meeting of 2014 at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, CA. The agenda and details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

CIRM Funding Opportunities

Current Applications

PA 08-06: CIRM Conference Grants - Applications for conference grants will be accepted, reviewed and approved periodically

Get more info about CIRM RFAs

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