

CIRM-Funded Program Targeting Vision Loss Gets Investment Boost from Japanese Pharmaceutical Company

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April 7, 2017 Oakland, CA Regenerative Patch Technologies LLC (RPT), which is running a clinical trial funded by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) targeting age-related macular degeneration, today announced an investment from Santen Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. (Santen).

Santen, based in Osaka, Japan, specializes in ophthalmology research and treatment. The investment will help with the development of RPT's therapy for macular degeneration, a condition that affects millions of people globally and has limited treatment options for the most common, dry form, of the disease. Macular Degeneration is caused by the deterioration of the macula, the central portion of the retina which is responsible for our ability to focus, read, drive a car and see objects like faces in fine details.

"One of our goals at CIRM is to help partner programs we fund with outside investors to increase their chances for success," says C. Randal Mills, Ph.D., President and CEO of CIRM. "Macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss in the US and it's estimated will affect 196 million people worldwide by 2020. We support high quality programs that help accelerate the search for effective stem cell treatments and cures for this devastating condition."

The implant RPT has developed contains retinal pigmented epithelial cells on a membrane that mimics the function of the Bruch's membrane. Both of these elements are frequently defective in patients with the dry form of macular degeneration. RPT is currently in a CIRM-funded Phase 1/2a clinical trial in patients with the most severe form of the disease called geographic atrophy.

"We are pleased to make this investment in support of RPT's innovative approach to fulfill the unmet medical needs in ophthalmology," said Naveed Shams, MD, PhD, Senior Corporate Officer, Chief Scientific Officer and Head of Global Research and Development at Santen. "Japan has been a leader in stem cell research and Santen is looking forward to partnering to develop RPT's innovative approach in order to bring treatment to many patients suffering from visual loss due to macular degeneration."

"The ability to partner with a global leader in ophthalmology like Santen is very exciting," said RPT's co-founder, Dennis Clegg Ph.D. "Such a strong partnership will greatly accelerate RPT's ability to develop our product safely and effectively."

For further information on the clinical trial, please visit <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT02590692>

About CIRM

At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today's most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$3 billion in funding and approximately 300 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world's largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.

For more information, go to www.cirm.ca.gov

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About Regenerative Patch Technologies LLC

Regenerative Patch Technologies LLC is a privately held company located in California developing regenerative medicine products for debilitating retinal diseases. The company is currently focused on developing a subretinal implant containing retinal pigmented epithelial cells derived from pluripotent stem cells on a specially designed ultrathin membrane. The implant is intended to replace diseased retinal tissue in patients with age related macular degeneration. The implant technology was established using grant funding from the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) which funded work to build and preclinically test the product. CIRM has most recently funded the ongoing Phase 1/2a clinical trial being conducted to assess the safety and potential activity of the implant in patients with geographic atrophy.

About Santen

As a specialty company dedicated to the ophthalmic field, Santen carries out research, development, marketing, and sales of pharmaceuticals. Santen is the market leader in Japan for prescription ophthalmic pharmaceuticals and sells products in over 50 countries. As a leading company in the field of ophthalmology, Santen aims to contribute to society by supplying valuable products and services to satisfy unmet medical needs. For more details, please see Santen's website (www.santen.com).

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