Press Release

CiRA Foundation

CHA UNIVERSITY

CiRA Foundation's First International Provision

Provision of HLA-homozygous iPS cell stocks to CHA University in Korea

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Kyoto, Japan, May 10, 2021 –The CiRA Foundation® ("CiRA_F"; located in Kyoto, Japan) and CHA University (Korea) signed the following agreement for collaborative research on 14 April 2021.

1. Overview

We are pleased to announce the first provision of our HLA-homozygous iPS cell stocks for research to an overseas research institute. The recipient, Professor Jihwan Song at CHA University, based in South Korea, is conducting research on developing stem cell-based therapies for several neurodegenerative diseases, including Huntington's, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, as well as stroke, mainly using iPS cells. Professor Song's group will use our iPS cell stocks to study these diseases and will later obtain another clinical strain of the same iPS cell stocks, with the aim of conducting clinical trials by 2025.

2. Background

The iPS Cell Stock Project is a national project that began at the Center for iPS Cell Research and Application (CiRA), Kyoto University in 2013 and was transferred to the CiRA_F in April 2020.
To date, the stock has produced 27 HLA-homozygous iPS cell lines for medical applications, and all recipients of the stock have been research institutions in Japan so far. These iPS cells have been used in clinical studies for age-related macular degeneration led by Kobe City Eye Hospital and Parkinson's disease led by Kyoto University Hospital along with other diseases. In order to promote the use of iPS cell-based therapies, the CiRA_F has obtained prior consents from blood donors for the commercialization of iPS cell-based therapies and for their use in clinical research and trials. We also evaluate the quality of the iPS cells that we have produced before shipping them. In accordance with our procedures, CHA University requested the provision of iPS cells from our cell stocks.

3. Summary of the plans

1) Agreement signed

CHA University and the CiRA_F have signed a joint research agreement on the provision of our cells on 14 April 2021.

2) Research period at CHA University using our stock

From the arrival of the cells to July 29, 2021
（with the possibility of extension).

4. About CiRA Foundation

The CiRA Foundation (CiRA_F) was recognized as a public interest incorporated foundation in April 2020. Its principle purpose is to provide the best iPS cell technology at affordable prices.
The CiRA_F manages the iPS Cell Stock for Regenerative Medicine Project, which was started by the Center for iPS Cell Research and Application (CiRA), Kyoto University, in 2013. The aim of this project is to prepare multiple iPS cell lines manufactured from healthy donors homozygous for human leukocyte antigens (HLA). These lines will expand the number of people who can receive related therapies with minimal immune reactions and are provided to academic and industrial organizations. The CiRA_F contributes to the commercialization of regenerative medicine by providing services including the manufacturing of iPS cell-derived products, quality assessment, storage, and publication of SOPs for manufacturing.

5. About CHA University

CHA University was originally founded as a medical school in 1996 and has grown into one of the most representative health science-specialized universities in Korea, with particular strengths in stem cells and regenerative medicine, as well as reproductive medicine. CHA University and CHA Medical Foundation are renowned for their active research and clinical applications using ES cells and mesenchymal stromal cells (MSC).

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