



Quest Diagnostics Launches Dementia Diagnostic Panel, First in Industry for Treatable Forms of Cognitive Impairment Based on Medical Guidelines

March 18, 2013

Test to be unveiled at the American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting in San Diego, March 16-23, 2013

MADISON, N.J. and WORCESTER, Mass., March 18, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Quest Diagnostics (NYSE: DGX), the world's leading provider of diagnostic information services, today announced the availability of the first clinical test panel for aiding the diagnosis of suspected dementia due to treatable forms of cognitive impairment. The test panel is believed to be the first commercial service from a clinical laboratory to combine several guideline-recommended tests for identifying secondary, treatable causes of dementia as a single blood test and report.

Dementia is characterized by the presence of cognitive dysfunctions, such as memory loss and impaired judgment. The new test may help primary care physicians evaluate a patient presenting with cognitive impairment for potentially reversible causes of dementia, such as vitamin B12 deficiency, hypothyroidism, anemia and diabetes, based on results of biological lab tests. Patients with abnormal results may respond to treatment administered by a primary care physician to reverse the underlying cause of dementia. Patients with normal results may require evaluation by a neurologist for additional possible causes of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

The new panel of tests are modeled after the recommendations of the American Academy of Neurology, the American Geriatrics Association, a National Institutes of Health Consensus Panel and the European Federation of Neurological Societies.

"The evaluation of suspected dementia is a significant medical challenge because many different conditions, from low TSH levels to diabetes, can cause cognitive impairment," said Joseph J. Higgins, MD, FAAN, medical director for Quest Diagnostics Neurology and Athena Diagnostics. "Our new test panel provides a standard laboratory evaluation to rule out confounders of memory or reversible causes of memory loss. Test results are useful in excluding co-morbidities and revealing potential risk factors, origin of confusional states and, sometimes, in identifying the primary cause of dementia."

Athena Diagnostics is a leader in dementia diagnostics primarily for neurologists, with a menu that includes eleven testing services, including cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) biomarker analysis, to aid the detection of frontotemporal dementia and other forms of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

Quest Diagnostics acquired Athena Diagnostics in April 2011 in order to add neurology diagnostic information services to its business, although Athena continues to operate largely as an independent business and brand. Dementia experts at Athena Diagnostics helped to define the panel's tests and report requirements, while Quest Diagnostics' experts developed and introduced the comprehensive offering at clinical laboratories where the individual tests are performed.

"This test panel highlights the ability of Quest Diagnostics and Athena Diagnostics to introduce diagnostic innovations that conform with practice parameters and complete gaps in guideline-based medical care, which is central to our diagnostic information services strategy," said Jay G. Wohlgemuth, MD, senior vice president, science and innovation, Quest Diagnostics. "We expect it will be the first of additional diagnostic information services designed to improve neurology diagnosis to emerge from collaboration with Athena Diagnostics."

The test will be unveiled during the American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting in San Diego, March 16-23, 2013 (Athena Diagnostics Booth 1413). At the conference, Athena Diagnostics will also introduce several new clinical lab-developed tests for a range of rare neurological disorders, including hereditary neuropathy and neuromuscular disease.

About Athena Diagnostics

Athena Diagnostics is a leader in diagnostic testing for neurological diseases and offers innovative tests for Alzheimer's disease, muscular dystrophy and other neuromuscular and developmental disorders. Athena, a division of Quest Diagnostics, is dedicated to providing neurologists and other physicians and specialists with insights that can improve patient health. Athena provides the most comprehensive test menu and intellectual property portfolio for neurological, endocrine, and renal conditions through more than 400 diagnostic tests. For more information, visit www.athenadiagnostics.com.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic information services that patients and doctors need to make better healthcare decisions. The company offers the broadest access to diagnostic testing services through its network of laboratories and patient service centers, and provides interpretive consultation through its extensive medical and scientific staff. Quest Diagnostics is a pioneer in developing innovative diagnostic tests and advanced healthcare information technology solutions that help improve patient care. Additional company information is available at www.QuestDiagnostics.com or follow us at Facebook.com/Quest Diagnostics and Twitter.com/QuestDX.

Quest, Quest Diagnostics, Athena Diagnostics and all associated Quest Diagnostics registered or unregistered trademarks are the property of Quest Diagnostics.

Quest Diagnostics Contacts:

Wendy Bost (Media): 973-520-2800

Dan Haemmerle (Investors): 973-520-2900

SOURCE Quest Diagnostics