



Quest Diagnostics to Unveil Extensions to its Women's Health and Personalized Medicine Test Offerings at the 2011 AACC Annual Meeting and Clinical Lab Expo

July 25, 2011

Athena Diagnostics' spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) testing menu is broadly available nationally to Quest Diagnostics' clients for the first time

Quest Diagnostics will also present novel scientific research and host the "What's New in Laboratory Medicine?" scientific speaker series in booth 3130

MADISON, N.J., July 25, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --

Quest Diagnostics Incorporated (NYSE: DGX), the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services, today announced it will unveil extensions to its women's health and AccuType® pharmacogenetic test menus, give eight scientific presentations and host six scientific speakers during the American Association of Clinical Chemistry (AACC) annual meeting and Clinical Lab Expo, to be held in Atlanta, July 26-28, 2011 (Exhibit number 3130).

Spinal Muscular Atrophy Testing Now Available Broadly in the U.S.

The extensions to the company's women's health menu feature Athena Diagnostics' spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) testing menu, believed to be the most comprehensive in the diagnostics industry. The services, which include adult-carrier screening and pre- and post-natal disease assessment testing, are now nationally available for the first time to physicians, laboratory directors and other clients of Quest Diagnostics. The offerings also position Quest Diagnostics as the only national major laboratory to provide testing services to assess SMA disease severity based on Athena's analysis of the number of copies of an SMA-associated gene.

Athena Diagnostics, which Quest Diagnostics acquired in April 2011, is the leader in neurology diagnostics and a pioneer in SMA testing, which it has performed since 1996. Prior to the acquisition, select Quest Diagnostics' business units had offered Athena Diagnostics' SMA testing services in select regions only.

The SMA adult-carrier screening test detects a defective survival motor neuron (SMN) 1 gene, which determines an individual's risk of passing SMA to offspring. The pre- and post-natal disease assessment tests identify the number of copies of the SMN2 gene, which affects disease severity.

SMA, a neuromuscular disease, is the second most common fatal autosomal-recessive disorder, with an estimated prevalence of one in 10,000 live births and an estimated carrier prevalence of about one in 40 to 60 individuals. If each parent possesses a defective SMN1 gene, there is a one in four chance their offspring will inherit the disease. SMA disease severity is affected greatly by the number of SMN2 gene copies. While many affected individuals will die by the age of two, others may live well into adulthood with significant or mild disability, in part based on SMN2 copy-number status.

With the Athena Diagnostics offering, Quest Diagnostics is now the only major national laboratory in the U.S. to provide testing services for identifying the number of SMN2 gene copies. The company's women's health menu also includes testing, counseling and interpretation services for aiding the detection of several developmental disorders, including cystic fibrosis, fragile X syndrome and autism spectrum disorders.

"When it comes to personal and family health, women and their physicians rightly expect their clinical laboratory to offer the comprehensive testing options, expertise and quality needed to make well-informed decisions," said Charles M. Strom, M.D., Ph.D., senior medical director, genetics, Quest Diagnostics, and a board-certified pediatrician. "The addition of Athena's SMA tests to Quest Diagnostics' menu enables us to offer the broadest range of genetic women's health testing and expert interpretative counseling services."

AccuType Pharmacogenomic Testing Now Includes Four Services

At its exhibit, Quest Diagnostics will also showcase its AccuType family of pharmacogenomic testing services for personalizing medicine. These include two tests Quest Diagnostics launched this year: AccuType Metformin, a service designed to help physicians predict if a patient with Type II diabetes or at risk for Type II diabetes will respond to metformin, and its AccuType IL28B test, designed to aid in the prediction of response to the widely used pegylated-interferon alpha-based therapy for treating hepatitis C virus infection. The AccuType line also includes tests introduced in recent years to aid in predicting patient response to the blood thinners clopidogrel (Plavix®) and warfarin.

Scientific Presentations and Speakers

In addition, the company's medical experts will give eight poster presentations providing novel data on vitamin D by liquid chromatography tandem mass spectrometry (LC/MS/MS), free T4 method comparison, and CYP2D6 allele prevalence by ethnicity. As part of the company's "What's New in Laboratory Medicine?" in-booth speaker series, Quest Diagnostics scientists and external academic and other experts will address topics of interest in clinical and laboratory medicine, including genetics and heart disease, vitamin D, endocrine disorders, infectious disease and prescription drug monitoring.

For a complete list of poster presentations and the speaker series agenda, please visit: QuestDiagnostics.com/2011AACC.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and 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 QuestDiagnostics.com. Follow us at Facebook.com/QuestDiagnostics and Twitter.com/QuestDX.

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