Quest Diagnostics Introduces CF Complete(TM) Test To Provide Sequencing of Complete Cystic Fibrosis Gene

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BALTIMORE, Oct 16, 2002 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Quest Diagnostics Incorporated (NYSE: DGX), the nation's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services, today introduced its new CF Complete(TM) test at the 52nd Annual Meeting of The American Society of Human Genetics. The CF Complete test enables physicians to identify rare mutations that cause cystic fibrosis (CF) by sequencing the complete coding sequence of the cystic fibrosis gene. Developed at Quest Diagnostics Nichols Institute esoteric testing laboratory in San Juan Capistrano, California, the CF Complete test broadens Quest Diagnostics' leading position in prenatal genetics testing.

The CF Complete test identifies more than 1,000 distinct mutations and provides more information than traditional CF screening tests to assist physicians in diagnosing, counseling or treating individuals with family history or clinical symptoms of cystic fibrosis. The new test is of particular value for use by gynecologists and geneticists who treat high-risk patients, and provides genetic counselors enhanced information for use in counseling patients. Ordering physicians have access to consultation by Quest Diagnostics' genetic counselors, and medical staff certified by the American Board of Medical Genetics. Quest Diagnostics Nichols Institute will perform the testing.

"The CF Complete test will help experts address difficult clinical cases and provide carrier detection and prenatal diagnosis for CF families with previously unidentified cystic fibrosis mutations," said Lucia L. Quinn, Senior Vice President, Advanced Diagnostics. "This important new test extends our comprehensive menu of CF testing and further broadens our leadership in prenatal testing for inherited disease."

Quest Diagnostics also offers screening tests for cystic fibrosis, which analyze patients' blood samples for all 25 mutations that are contained in a 2001 recommendation by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

One in every 25 Caucasian people is estimated to be a carrier of cystic fibrosis in the United States. Approximately 30,000 patients currently receive treatment. Approximately 25% of cystic fibrosis patients have at least one mutation that cannot be identified by either standard or "extended panel" screening. Therefore carrier detection for other family members and prenatal diagnosis for subsequent pregnancies is not possible for these families using previous cystic fibrosis testing. The CF Complete test enables physicians to identify these rare mutations and offer carrier detection and/or prenatal diagnosis for both the nuclear and extended family members.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics Incorporated is the nation's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services, providing insights that enable physicians, hospitals, managed care organizations and other healthcare professionals to make decisions to improve health. The company offers patients and physicians the broadest access to diagnostic laboratory services through its national network of laboratories and patient service centers. Quest Diagnostics is the leading provider of esoteric testing, including gene-based medical testing, and empowers healthcare organizations and clinicians with state-of-the-art connectivity solutions that improve practice management. Additional company information can be found on the Internet at: http://www.questdiagnostics.com .

The statements in this press release which are not historical facts or information may be forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that could cause the outcome to be materially different. Certain of these risks and uncertainties are described in the Quest Diagnostics Incorporated 2001 Form 10-K and subsequent filings.

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