



**Media Release**

## **ES Cell International & National Stem Cell Centre to Collaborate**

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**Singapore, July 20, 2004** - ES Cell International Pte Ltd (ESI) and Australia's Biotechnology Centre of Excellence, the National Stem Cell Centre (NSCC) today announced a collaborative agreement that could ultimately facilitate the development of new treatments for diabetes and other debilitating diseases.

The agreement pertains to research on human embryonic stem cells being undertaken at the Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development by Dr Andrew Elefanty and Dr Ed Stanley. These researchers are studying mechanisms to control production of specific types of cells which have potential to treat diseases such as diabetes and leukaemia.

Under the terms of the collaborative agreement ESI will commercialise the outcomes of research relating to diabetes. In turn, the NSCC will have the right to commercialise the outcomes of the research in other therapeutic areas.

The benefit of human embryonic stem cells is that they have the unique ability to develop into any type of cell in the human body. The Elefanty and Stanley laboratory is working on methods to control these developmental processes to produce cells for the treatment of diseases.

Says Dr Andrew Elefanty: "As scientists, we are delighted that the outcomes of our research could assist people suffering a variety of debilitating diseases. We are especially happy that companies with established expertise such as ESI and the NSCC will be responsible for turning our results into tangible therapeutics."

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Commenting on the agreement, Robert Klupacs, CEO of ES Cell International, said, “We have had a long and exciting collaboration with the Stanley/Elfanty research group and are absolutely delighted that ESI and NSCC will be working together to continue to develop the world class discoveries from this team. ESI’s internal programs in human Embryonic Stem Cell (hESC) derived islet cell therapy are well complemented by the Elfanty/Stanley group and significantly enhance our ability to bring hESC derived cell therapies to the clinic in the shortest possible timelines.”

NSCC Chief Executive Officer, Dr Hugh Niall said, “A key element of the NSCC’s role is to successfully pursue the commercialisation of therapeutic treatments and this agreement will greatly assist that objective.”

“ESI is a pioneer in the field of hESC development, particularly in the field of diabetes cell therapy. These credentials make them a fitting partner for the NSCC and the collaboration is an excellent example of our strategy to build relationships with the leading players in particular disease areas and technology platforms,” Dr Niall said.

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### **About ES Cell International, Pte Ltd (ESI)**

ES Cell International, Pte Ltd is a regenerative medicine company focusing on developing diabetes and cardiovascular cell therapeutic products from human embryonic stem (hES) cells. ES Cell International Pte Ltd was incorporated in Singapore in July 2000. ESI is the owner of six of the 19 available hES lines on the US NIH hES registry. Its shareholder base includes investors from Australia, Singapore, USA and Israel. ([www.escellinternational.com](http://www.escellinternational.com))

### **About National Stem Cell Centre (NSCC)**

Australia’s National Stem Cell Centre is a major collaborative initiative including many of Australia’s leading academic researchers to develop innovative therapeutic products to treat a range of serious injuries and debilitating diseases. It was formed out of the ‘Backing Australia’s Ability’ initiative of the Australian Government. ([www.nsc.edu.au](http://www.nsc.edu.au))

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