

## **Norwood Immunology Partners with Australian Stem Cell Centre and Monash University**

Melbourne, Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2006: New technology combining immune system research and stem cell know-how will be developed under a tripartite agreement between Monash University, the Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC) and Norwood Immunology.

The research will focus on controlling the immune system to minimise rejection of stem cell therapies introduced into the body. This may enable the successful grafting of stem cells to repair organs and tissues that are damaged as a result of disease processes.

The immune system will usually only accept cells it recognises as its own. Foreign cells and tissues are routinely rejected, posing significant difficulties when a patient undergoes a transplant procedure. Immune rejection is one of the major hurdles facing stem cell researchers in developing potential clinical treatments.

Associate Professor Richard Boyd is the principal investigator and the director of the research program. "This research will address one of the major hurdles facing stem cell scientists around the world, and that is how to stop the body from rejecting introduced cells," he said. "The research skills of NIM and the ASCC are highly complementary and the incorporation of stem cells should also enhance NIM's platform technology for repairing damage to the immune system. I believe we are the only group with a research program that aims to combine the immune system with stem cell technology."

Under the agreement - signed between Norwood Abbey through its subsidiary Norwood Immunology, Monash and the Australian Stem Cell Centre - the research will take place at the Monash Immunology and Stem Cell Laboratories at the university's Clayton campus in Melbourne; it will have access to the Australian Stem Cell Centre's specialised research facilities in the same building. The Australian Stem Cell Centre and Norwood will fund the research and jointly commercialise the intellectual property that results from it.

Combining immunology with stem cell research builds upon foundation technologies established by both groups.

Under the agreement, Norwood will give the Australian Stem Cell Centre access to its thymic and bone marrow regrowth technology. This provides a method of replenishing stem cells and potentially facilitates the engraftment and uptake of introduced stem cells into the body, improving their ability to repair damaged tissue and minimising their likelihood of rejection.

The new research technology could add significant value in intellectual property for Norwood and the Australian Stem Cell Centre.

## **Background**

### ***Norwood Immunology***

Norwood Immunology is a company focused on technologies and therapies to rejuvenate activity of the immune system, through re-growth of the thymus, improvements in bone marrow function and enhancement of T cell functionality. To find out more about the Norwood group, visit [www.norwoodabbey.com](http://www.norwoodabbey.com) and [www.norwoodimmunology.com](http://www.norwoodimmunology.com)

### ***Australian Stem Cell Centre***

The Australian Stem Cell Centre is Australia's Biotechnology Centre of Excellence. The Centre has partnered with nine leading Australian universities and research institutions and brings together a critical mass of outstanding Australian stem cell research that is internationally competitive and recognised.

The Centre's principal objective is to integrate a national multi-institutional research and discovery program to develop treatments for serious disease through the application of stem cells and related technologies.

The Australian Stem Cell Centre is funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments.

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