Cardinal Health, University of Washington Create Innovative Partnership to Advance Use of Molecular Imaging in Clinical Trials

DUBLIN, Ohio, and SEATTLE, June 4, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Cardinal Health and the University of Washington (UW) today announced an innovative public-private collaboration designed to advance the use of molecular imaging in clinical investigations and trials.

Molecular imaging is one of the most promising areas of development in biotechnology, where specialized radiopharmaceuticals, or Positron Emission Tomography (PET) "imaging agents," are injected into the body to detect and trace abnormal cellular functions that are associated with health issues such as heart disease, neurological disorders and many forms of cancer. These imaging agents, which are visible using sophisticated imaging scanners, make it easier for physicians to non-invasively diagnose, monitor and potentially treat disease at the earliest stages of onset.

Through this collaboration, the UW's Department of Radiology will relocate a portion of its on-campus molecular tracer laboratories into Cardinal Health's PET manufacturing facility located in downtown Seattle. The UW laboratories that are part of the move will include one operated by Dr. John Grierson, who developed the PET agent F-18 fluorothymidine (FLT), which is now distributed nationally through Cardinal Health and is being used in a wide array of clinical trials. UW's Department of Radiology will have access to Cardinal Health's cyclotron, radiopharmaceutical products and research support services, to aid in the efficient operation of its research facility.

By co-locating in the same physical space, the two organizations will combine the University of Washington's internationally-recognized PET research and development expertise with Cardinal Health's expertise in the FDA-compliant production and distribution of PET imaging agents to accelerate the research, development and commercialization of new molecular imaging agents.

"Consistent with the cycle of innovation, we look forward to collaboratively working with Cardinal Health to develop new uses for molecular imaging tracers - and the clinical applications of tomorrow," said Dr. Norman J. Beauchamp, Jr., UW professor of radiology and chairman of UW's Department of Radiology. "Cardinal Health's nuclear pharmacy expertise and its commitment to supporting the growth of molecular imaging through clinical investigations make it an outstanding partner to help us work toward our ultimate, shared goal: to lessen the impact of devastating conditions including cancer, neurological disorders and cardiovascular disease."

The University of Washington is one of the nation's leading research institutions, receiving more research dollars from the National Institutes of Health than any other public university in the United States.

Cardinal Health's Nuclear Pharmacy Services business operates the nation's largest network of radiopharmacies. The company has also strategically located its nationwide network of cyclotrons to enable many of its radiopharmacies to compound and dispense high-energy PET imaging agents in unit-dose form.

Its vast network of "PET-enabled" pharmacies, combined with its broad nuclear pharmacy scale, comprehensive fleet and logistics capabilities enable it to play a critical role in supporting clinical trials of both proprietary and non-proprietary imaging agents.

Cardinal Health has already begun the process of expanding its Seattle radiopharmacy facility to accommodate UW's new radiochemistry laboratory, where UW researchers will work alongside Cardinal Health staff and technicians. Renovations to the expanded facility are expected to be completed by the beginning of 2011.

"We are very proud to partner with the University of Washington - one of the nation's preeminent research institutions - to advance the future of molecular imaging with the development of this innovative, world-class facility," said John Rademacher, president of Cardinal Health's Nuclear and Pharmacy Services business. "This collaboration will provide us with exciting new opportunities to partner with innovators and pharmaceutical research organizations to enable the research, development and commercialization of new molecular imaging agents that have the potential to dramatically improve patient health."

About UW Medicine

UW Medicine trains new physicians and medical scientists, researches health and disease, and provides primary care and
specially care to patients from Seattle and across the Pacific Northwest. The UW Medicine health system includes UW Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, Northwest Hospital, the UW School of Medicine, UW Medicine Neighborhood Clinics, UW Physicians, Airlift Northwest, and the UW's partnership in the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance with Seattle Children's and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

UW Medicine has major academic and service affiliations with Seattle Children's Hospital, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the Veteran's Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle and the VA Hospital in Boise. Among its 2,002 regular faculty and 4,874 volunteer and part-time faculty are four Nobel Laureates, 32 members of the National Academy of Sciences, and 33 members of the Institute of Medicine. For more information about UW Medicine, visit http://www.uwmedicine.org/

About Cardinal Health

Headquartered in Dublin, Ohio, Cardinal Health, Inc. (NYSE: CAH) is a $96 billion health care services company that improves the cost-effectiveness of health care. As the business behind health care, Cardinal Health helps pharmacies, hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers and physician offices focus on patient care while reducing costs, improving efficiency and quality, and increasing profitability. Cardinal Health is an essential link in the health care supply chain, providing pharmaceuticals and medical products to more than 60,000 locations each day. The company is also a leading manufacturer of medical and surgical products, including gloves, surgical apparel and fluid management products. In addition, the company supports the growing diagnostic industry by supplying medical products to clinical laboratories and operating the nation's largest network of radiopharmacies that dispense products to aid in the early diagnosis and treatment of disease. Ranked #17 on the Fortune 500, Cardinal Health employs more than 30,000 people worldwide. More information about the company may be found at cardinalhealth.com.

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