

## PRESS RELEASE

# Cordlife supports clinical trials with donated umbilical cords and mesenchymal stem cell banking service in the Philippines

### Key points:

- Cordlife to support Makati Medical Center's Center for Regenerative Medicine with the provision of donated cord tissue and the storage of expanded mesenchymal stem cells.
- The Center for Regenerative Medicine has initiated clinical trials to evaluate the safety and efficacy of mesenchymal stem cells derived from umbilical cord tissue for diabetic foot ulceration and COVID-19.
- The diabetic foot ulceration trial is funded by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology and their COVID-19 trial is pending approval.
- The objective of the diabetic foot ulceration trial is to prove the safety and efficacy of mesenchymal stem cells obtained from umbilical cords to speed up the healing of wounds among diabetic patients and stimulate skin regeneration and development of new blood vessels.

**Singapore, 21 September 2020** - Cordlife Group Limited ("Cordlife", together with its subsidiaries, the "Group") today announced their full support for the Center for Regenerative Medicine of Makati Medical Center ("MMC-CRM" or the "Center") with the provision of donated cords and the launch of Mesenchymal Stem Cell ("MSC") Banking Service in the Philippines through its subsidiary Cordlife Medical Phils Inc. ("Cordlife Philippines" or the "Company").

MMC-CRM is accredited by the Philippines' Department of Health as a facility allowed to engage in human stem cell or cellular therapy. The Center has implemented a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of umbilical cord tissue derived MSCs for diabetic foot ulceration. Funded by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology ("PCHRD-DOST"), the trial aims to investigate whether MSCs can speed up the healing of foot wounds among diabetic patients and stimulate skin regeneration and development of new blood vessels. MMC-CRM has also proposed another trial with umbilical cord tissue derived MSCs for COVID-19, which is pending approval from PCHRD-DOST.

Over the years, advances in stem cell research have led to the development of cellular therapies, which brings great promise to support a wide range of conditions such as stroke, spinal cord injury and autism. MSCs are extensively studied because of their therapeutic potential in regenerative medicine, owing to their unique ability to self-renew and differentiate into various cell types.

According to MMC-CRM, previous research conducted using MSCs on diabetic foot ulcers showed a higher rate of healing compared to regular treatment achieving approximately 70 to 80 percent wound closure at 3 to 4 months after treatment. Furthermore, these studies demonstrated significant improvements in limb blood flow by the generation of new blood vessels, pain-free walking, skin sensation and ankle-brachial index.

Primarily found in our bone marrow, MSCs remain in a dormant state until they are needed to promote healing within the body. Although MSCs can be isolated from various sources such as bone marrow and adipose tissue, their effectiveness and numbers decline as we age. MSCs derived from cord tissue are some of the youngest and most primitive MSCs that can be obtained safely and painlessly. Younger cells tend to replicate

at a faster rate and have higher potency, which makes cord tissue MSCs amongst the most capable cells available.

To support MMC-CRM's research efforts, Cordlife Philippines will provide donated umbilical cords for the trials. At the same time, Cordlife Philippines will also launch a banking service for the storage of MSCs derived from umbilical cord tissue. Cordlife Philippines is the first and only cord blood bank in the country to provide MSC banking service.

Usually discarded as medical waste, Cordlife will collect the umbilical cord following the birth of a baby. Upon collection, the Company will work with MMC-CRM to isolate and expand MSCs from the umbilical cord. The expanded cells will be stored at the Cordlife Philippines' cryogenic storage facility located at Ayala Land. Once frozen at -196°C in the liquid nitrogen tank, the cells are stored in a stable state and can be retrieved whenever they are needed for cellular therapies.

Ms Tan Poh Lan, Group Chief Executive Officer of Cordlife said, "We are honoured to be a part of MMC-CRM's groundbreaking research efforts to advancing healthcare in the Philippines. We are fully committed to supporting them in the building of a holistic ecosystem to advance stem cell research and develop cellular therapies."

"The umbilical cord is a great source of MSCs. MMC-CRM has been fortunate to be awarded with a scientific research grant by DOST-PCHRD on the use of umbilical cord MSCs for diabetic foot ulcer. This is proof that the Philippine government is interested in the potential of MSC treatments," said Dr Jose Maria Co Avila, Director of MMC-CRM and Chairman of Department of Pathology and Laboratories, Makati Medical Centre.

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### **About Cordlife Philippines**

Cordlife Philippines, a subsidiary of Cordlife Group Limited, has acquired the prestigious status of being the country's first and only DOH-registered, ISO 9001:2015-certified, and AABB-accredited private cord blood bank with a local stem cell processing and cryopreservation facility.

AABB (formerly American Association of Blood Banks) is a global leader in standards development, accreditation, and implementation of quality systems in transfusion medicine and cellular therapies. Earning an AABB accreditation means that cord blood released from our facility adheres to the highest global standards as well as the medical institution's stringent requirements for cellular therapy. Major therapy centers both here and abroad will require cord blood units from accredited facilities.

To meet the global standards in stem cell processing, Cordlife has heavily invested on cutting-edge technology such as Sepax™, the world's most advanced fully automated cord blood processing system, that can recover up to 99% of stem cells for maximum transplant success and CellOptima™, a Cordlife-exclusive patented technology from Singapore enables the isolation of two types of stem cells from umbilical cord lining namely, mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) and cord lining epithelial stem cells (CLEpSCs).

Beyond umbilical cord blood and cord lining banking, Cordlife Philippines offers a comprehensive suite of diagnostics services for the mother and child segment including non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) and genetic screening services. To learn more about cord blood banking, visit Parent's Guide to Cord Blood Foundation at <https://parentsguidecordblood.org/en/bank/cordlife-philippines>

## **About Cordlife Group Limited**

Established in May 2001, Cordlife Group Limited (“Cordlife”, together with its subsidiaries, the “Group”) is a leading company dedicated to safeguarding the well-being of mother and child. The Group is listed on the Mainboard of the Singapore Exchange in 2012 and a pioneer in private cord blood banking in Asia.

Cordlife owns the largest network of cord blood banks in Asia with full stem cell banking facilities in six key markets namely Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Malaysia and the Philippines. In Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia, Cordlife operates the largest private cord blood banks; and is amongst the top three market leaders in India and Malaysia. In January 2018, Cordlife became the market leader in Hong Kong with the acquisition of the largest private cord blood bank in the country, Healthbaby Biotech (Hong Kong) Co., Limited. Through its majority-owned subsidiary in Malaysia, Stemlife Berhad, Cordlife holds indirect stake in Thailand’s largest private cord blood bank, Thai Stemlife. Through its marketing agents, Cordlife also expanded its presence to Myanmar and Vietnam in 2017 as well as Bangladesh in 2019.

Beyond cord blood and cord lining banking, Cordlife offers a comprehensive suite of diagnostics services for the family including urine-based newborn metabolic screening, non-invasive prenatal testing, paediatric vision screening and family genetic screening services.

Quality and customer focus are amongst some of the cornerstones of Cordlife. All of the Group’s facilities are accredited by AABB, the organisation behind the world’s gold standard for cord blood banking. In addition, Cordlife Singapore and Healthbaby are also two of the four cord blood banks in Asia, and ten in the world, to be accredited by both AABB and FACT, another world-class accreditation body for cord blood banks globally. In the area of clinical diagnostics, Cordlife India, Cordlife Hong Kong and Healthbaby are accredited by the College of American Pathologists (“CAP”). These quality achievements underpin the Group’s commitment to providing reliable healthcare solutions through innovation and technological advancement. For more information, visit <http://cordlife.listedcompany.com>

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