

## **CORDLIFE LAUNCHES BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME TO EXPAND OPERATIONS GLOBALLY**

**28 October 2002** – CordLife Pte Ltd today announced the company’s plans to launch its **Business Partnership Programme (BPP)**. The BPP will enable partners to leverage upon CordLife’s expertise and offer private autologous umbilical cord blood banking services in their respective countries. This is the first time that umbilical cord blood (UCB) banking services will be offered in such a large scale, internationally.

“Since our incorporation, CordLife has realized the tremendous potential for stem cell therapeutics, and understands the need to make UCB banking more accessible,” said Mr. Steven Fang, CEO and Founder of CordLife. “With some 175,000 babies being born in Asia alone everyday, it made sense for us to launch the Business Partnership Programme and reach out to a wider market”.

Through the BPP, CordLife is looking for partners, who are keen to collaborate and set up local offices, to handle private UCB banking services. These operations will tap into CordLife’s headquarters in Singapore, by leveraging upon CordLife’s experience, know how and skills in providing the unique service of UCB banking. As CordLife is the first UCB bank with both international and regional presence, business partners will enjoy first-to-market advantages and leadership position in stem cell banking. For more information on stem cells and umbilical cord blood banking, see Annex 1.

The BPP will enable CordLife to continue its global expansion and bring benefits of UCB banking to a wider population more effectively. This is the first time any cord blood banking company is embarking on such a partnership program. For more information on CordLife, see Annex 2.

Interested BPP parties should visit CordLife’s website for contact details, [www.cordlife.com](http://www.cordlife.com)

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## **Annex 1 – Background on stem cells and umbilical cord blood banking**

### **Stem cells – Set to become the leading medical therapy of the future**

Stem cells are one of the most promising cells in the human body. As unspecialized cells, they have the unique ability to self-replicate and differentiate into specialized cells, with individual functions. Unlike embryonic stem cells, the umbilical cord blood is a non-controversial source of stem cells. It contains a rich source of haematopoietic stem cells (HSC), which are currently being used in transplant therapies around the world.

HSCs are the progenitor cells of blood. They can differentiate into red blood cells (transport oxygen to the organs and tissues), white blood cells (produce antibodies and fight bacteria) and platelets (cause blood to clot). In addition to the umbilical cord blood, HSCs can also be found in the peripheral blood, and the bone marrow.

For decades, doctors have been using HSC transplants as a life-saving therapy. They can be used to treat over 45 diseases<sup>1</sup>, including certain blood disorders, immunodeficiencies, metabolic diseases and malignancies. Upon transplant, the infused HSCs migrate to the patients' bone marrow, where they regenerate both the blood and immune system. Since the first umbilical cord blood transplant in 1988, there have been over 2,500 successful umbilical cord blood transplants around the world<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore with rapid technology advancements, new applications for stem cells are expected to arise, positioning stem cells as one of the more promising therapies of the future.

### **Umbilical Cord Blood Banking**

The actual banking of umbilical cord blood is a simple process. CordLife works with its clients' doctors to collect the cord blood immediately after delivery of the child. The cord blood is clamped and sterilized and the blood is collected using a blood bag. The blood bag will then be transported to CordLife's licensed laboratory (licensed by the Singapore Ministry of Health). Here it is tested for infections or contamination. The blood will then be processed, to remove the red blood cells (which do not contain stem cells) and the nucleated cells will be frozen at a controlled rate, to  $-196^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Here they can remain cryogenically frozen indefinitely<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The University Hospitals of Columbia and Cornell

<sup>2</sup> Viacell Inc

<sup>3</sup> New York State Department of Health

## Annex 2 - About CordLife Pte Ltd

CordLife is a pioneering private stem cell biotechnology and regenerative medicine company, with global presence in Asia, Europe and the USA. CordLife's business activities revolve around 3 key areas:

- 1) **Stem cell banking** involves the collection, processing and storing of stem cells, which act as potential source material for life saving therapies. CordLife currently banks stem cells from the umbilical cord blood, and is positioned to tap upon other sources, such as peripheral blood and adipose tissue.
- 2) **Research and Development** aims to increase the number of stem cells, while maintaining their unique regenerative and differentiation properties. CordLife has already filed a patent for this *ex-vivo* stem cell expansion project.
- 3) **Therapeutics** aims to bridge science from the laboratory, with health treatment options. CordLife is currently exploring new stem cell therapies with other specialist clinics and hospitals.

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