



PRESS RELEASE

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Minority-Based Health-Care Organizations Endorse Landmark Clinical Trial For the Prevention of Heart Attack

Washington, DC – A coalition of minority-based health-care organizations (including the National Medical Association [NMA], the Alliance of Minority Medical Associations, Howard University, and the National Minority Health Month Foundation [NMHMF]) today announced their support for a landmark clinical trial to be conducted in patients of combined African and European lineage who self-identify as blacks. The support of this trial is part of a larger, concerted effort to accelerate minority enrollment in clinical trials. “Progress to date in enrolling minorities in clinical trials has been relatively slow and uneven,” said NMA President Albert Morris, MD. “One of our organizational goals is to encourage greater representation of minorities in new drug clinical trials whose aim is to address major unmet medical needs in society as a whole.”

The Leukotrienes in Coronary Artery Disease (LTCAD) study is a multi center phase III clinical trial initiated by deCODE genetics to examine the safety and efficacy of DG031, a developmental compound for the prevention of heart attack. DG031 works to counteract the biological effects of gene variants that deCODE has linked to increased risk of heart attack in a range of populations. Enrollment for the trial will focus on patients with prior unstable angina or acute myocardial infarction who have the highest identifiable risk of heart attack. Recent research suggests that the risk for heart attack among individuals of combined African and European ancestry who carry a variant of the gene encoding leukotriene A4 hydrolase (LTA4H) is two-and-a-half times greater than average. “What makes this clinical trial particularly important for us is that African Americans are not the only susceptible population group to be studied globally,” said Howard University Hospital Director of Cardiology Deborah Williams, MD.

The coalition will work with deCODE to facilitate recruitment of clinical investigators and patients into the trial. “Successful recruitment of minorities in this and future clinical trials is essential to confirm that therapeutic interventions targeting the underlying biological causes of cardiovascular events may confer long-term morbidity and mortality benefits to at-risk populations,” said Randall Maxey, MD, President of the Alliance of Minority Medical Associations and former NMA President.

NMHMF has observed that African Americans suffer disproportionately from cardiovascular events, with the highest overall mortality rate and the highest out-of-hospital coronary death rate of any ethnic group in the United States, particularly at younger ages. “Not only could this be an important milestone in bridging the health-care gap, but it may suggest to others that conducting a small and highly sensitive trial in a high-risk population may offer the greatest possibilities of success,” said Gary A. Puckrein, PhD, executive director of NMHMF. “Since minority populations lead the nation in the incidence and prevalence of so many chronic diseases, yet are so underrepresented in clinical trials, it is our sincere hope that the LTCAD study offers a new model in which this high-risk community is recruited into trials and the results of those trials are generalized to the population at large.”



About the National Minority Health Month Foundation

The National Minority Health Month Foundation (www.nmhmf.org), a nonprofit organization founded in 1998, was established to strengthen national and local efforts to eliminate the disproportionate burden of premature death and preventable illness in racial and ethnic minorities and other special populations through the use of evidence-based, data-driven initiatives. The Foundation has developed a comprehensive relational data platform for identifying the prevalence of health-status and health-care disparities at the zip-code level. This centralized data warehouse allows the Foundation to house vital statistics; demographic, environmental, claims, prescription-drug, and clinical-laboratory values; health-care access points, and other data. The Foundation is thus able to measure and forecast health status in small geographic areas, evaluate the impact of specific interventions, monitor changes in health outcomes, and serve as a valuable resource for the health-disparities movement.

About the National Medical Association

The National Medical Association (NMA) is the largest and oldest national organization representing African American physicians and their patients in the United States. NMA is a 501(c)(3) national professional and scientific organization representing the interests of more than 30,000 African American physicians and the patients they serve. NMA is committed to improving the quality of health among minorities and disadvantaged people through its membership, professional development, community health education, advocacy, research, and partnerships with federal and private agencies. Throughout its history, NMA has focused primarily on health issues related to African Americans and medically underserved populations; however, its principles, goals, initiatives, and philosophy encompass all ethnic groups.

About deCODE

deCODE genetics (NASDAQ: DCGN) is a global leader in applying human genetics to develop drugs for common diseases. deCODE's population approach has enabled it to discover and target key biological pathways involved in conditions ranging from heart attack to cancer. deCODE is turning these discoveries into new medicine to better treat and prevent many of the biggest challenges to public health. deCODE is delivering on the promise of the new genetics. Web site: www.decode.com.

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