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CONNECTIVITY INDUSTRY CONSORTIUM (CIC) ALIGNS TO DEVELOP STANDARDS FOR THE POINT-OF-CARE INDUSTRY

May 1, 2000 – In a committed effort to develop standards in today’s rapidly growing field of point-of-care testing (POCT), the Connectivity Industry Consortium (CIC) a non-profit, industry-driven consortium has been officially chartered. In addressing the impediments to point-of-care (POC) device connectivity, the CIC’s senior executives, made up of over 32 member companies and healthcare providers agreed to an organizational structure, technical plan and timeline to develop a standards-based connectivity solution. The CIC membership has also agreed to integrate the new standards in forthcoming products.

Agilent Laboratories has taken the lead in organizing the CIC. At the request of the American Association of Clinical Chemistry’s (AACC) Point of Care Testing (POCT) Division, Agilent Labs, Agilent’s central research organization, proposed the structure and timeline for the CIC and hosted its first meeting on October 20, in Redwood City, California. “The membership of the AACC’s POCT division has made it clear that an effective connectivity standard for POC devices is its highest priority,” said Emery Stephans, head of the industry liaison committee of the AACC’s POC division. “A uniform standard, designed jointly by users and vendors will help to make the development of more sophisticated POC systems economically feasible. This motivated Agilent Labs to take the lead in creating this consortium” said Dirk Boecker, M.D., Ph.D., of Agilent Technologies.

The CIC is an open, non-profit, industry-driven consortium comprised of device manufacturers, information system vendors and health care providers. It is chartered to address impediments to POC device connectivity with the objective of enabling seamless information exchange between POC devices and electronic medical records and laboratory information systems. The CIC’s goal is to produce a standards-based connectivity solution within one year, after which the solution will be transferred to a chartered standards maintenance organization. Where possible, the consortium will utilize existing standards in developing the solution.

The CIC's members are among the leaders in POC diagnostic devices, health care, and information systems and include Agilent Technologies, AVL Scientific Corporation, Bayer Diagnostics, Instrumentation Laboratory, Lifescan Inc., and Medical Automation Systems, Radiometer Medical A/S, Roche Diagnostics, and Sunquest Information Systems

The CIC's efforts will help both POC system manufacturers for whom the cost of developing proprietary solutions is prohibitive, as well as health-care providers who are striving to manage the cost and quality of care and must cope with a multitude of device interfaces. The Consortium's members agree on the value of the CIC's goals. "Institutions, like Johns Hopkins, have been asking the industry for better connectivity for POC products. The consortium is in an excellent position to solve this problem and we will work energetically to participate," said Jim Nichols, Ph.D., of Johns Hopkins University.

According to Sidney A. Goldblatt, MD, CEO of Sunquest, "The consortium will make it possible for health care institutions, information systems companies, and instrument manufacturers to cooperate and create a standard that will benefit the patient, the physician, and the industry."

Without connectivity standards, growth in POC testing will be difficult to realize as solutions will be difficult to design, manufacture and deliver to market. According to Ned Barnholt, President and CEO of Agilent Technologies, "The POC testing market represents a significant opportunity for Agilent, however growth in this market will require standards. The CIC is best positioned to provide a connectivity standard solution."

By making test results available immediately at the patient's side, POC testing serves to increase the quality of patient care while at the same time decreasing its overall cost. Advances in miniaturization, microprocessors and electro-optic components have enabled the development of hand-held devices that can perform diagnostic tests that were previously only possible using bench-sized instruments located in a central laboratory. Thus, a physician using a POC device could perform a diagnostic test and modify a patient's therapy much more quickly than using conventional procedures. The CIC's intent is to enable the use of these critical, diagnostic decision points by integrating this information into a facilities overall information system.

Membership

The CIC will continue to accept additional members with full voting rights through June 1st 2000. After this date, new members may fully participate but will not be granted voting rights. Any party interested in joining



the CIC may contact either Suzanne I. Cross, CIC President (908-704-3858; scross@ocdus.jnj.com) or Chris Feters, CIC Secretary (717-329-6504; cfeters@computer.org) or consult the CIC website at <http://med.labs.agilent.com/CIC> for further details.

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