Biotech: Partnership between Fasteris and Medisupport

Geneva, Switzerland  17 October 2013 – Fasteris, a DNA sequencing company based in Plan-les-Ouates, Switzerland, participated to the development and launch of Switzerland’s first non-invasive prenatal diagnostic test. The company just joined the Medisupport Network of regional laboratories.

This is a première in terms of collaboration: a group specialized in diagnostics (Medisupport), a NGS DNA sequencing company (Fasteris) and the SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics joined forces to develop Switzerland’s first non-invasive prenatal diagnostic test.

Named Prendia, this test based on Next-Generation DNA Sequencing (NGS) technologies is the first and only one able to detect at more than 99% the most frequent trisomies (trisomies 21, 18 and 13) in the fetus, as well as certain structural anomalies, from a maternal blood sample. It is an innovative method of prenatal diagnosis that complements traditional tests and, unlike invasive procedures such as amniocentesis, there is no risk of miscarriage due to the intervention. The Vital-IT group of SIB has developed an algorithm that allows a robust and early detection of chromosomal aberrations in both number (eg. trisomies) and structure (structural aberrations).

Building on this success, Fasteris strengthens this collaboration by integrating the Medisupport group, contributing a little more to make this network a unique platform for medical diagnosis, genetics and bioinformatics. A few months after the announcement of the upcoming opening of the Geneva Biotech Center, it is clear that the Geneva area remains a center of excellence in this field.

About Fasteris

Fasteris SA provides DNA sequencing services worldwide. The company was founded in Geneva in 2003 by Laurent Farinelli and Magne Osteras. In 1996 in Geneva, Dr. Farinelli co-invented the “DNA Clusters”, a key technology of the genomics revolution that enabled US company illumina to become the world leader in Next-Generation DNA sequencing.

Fasteris was the first service company in the world to buy an illumina sequencer. Our researchers, in collaboration with our customers and partners, have developed new applications in various fields: analysis of all genes expressed in a plant; metagenomics of bacteria; first genome of an ant or a spider; identification mutations causing leukemia, etc..

Fasteris scientists are co-authors of more than 30 high-impact publications and our services are cited in hundreds of publications and patents.

In 2013, Fasteris helped develop and launch Prendia, a novel non-invasive prenatal diagnosis. The company just joined the Medisupport Network.

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About Medisupport

Medisupport is a federation of regional Swiss laboratories. Our company was founded in 2008, but includes laboratories that existed for several decades. Wishing to preserve local specificities and sensitivities, we mostly use brand names of local entities.

Today Medisupport includes 15 laboratories:

- 12 medical tests and pathology labs, providing local services for French- and most of German-speaking Switzerland (Aurigen, BBV, Bioanalytica, Bioanalytica aarelader, Dianalabs, Dianalabs-Romandie, Dianalabs Valais, Dianapath, Genesupport, MCL, Polyanalytic, Toggweiler).
- 2 health (hospital, food, environmental) and drug analysis labs for the whole of Switzerland (Hpp-ecobion & Bioexam).
- 1 genomics DNA sequencing lab, providing services to international research institutes (Fasteris).

A certain degree of autonomy is given to each laboratory, allowing it to establish close links with universities, medical societies, governments and local communities and providing services tailored to regional needs.

Thanks to a centralized IT service, identical analysis methods and sophisticated logistics we can provide to our customers, regardless of their geographic location, access to all analyzes of the Swiss catalog of analyses.

Nearly fifty scientists, teachers, doctors, biochemists, biologists and pharmacists are available to help and advise the medical doctors about the complex pathologies they must face, in order to provide the correct diagnosis.

Medisupport is primarily a team sharing a passion, the same philosophy and the same vocation to serve patients and the medical profession.

www.medisupport.ch

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About SIB

The SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics is an academic non-profit foundation of public utility federating activities in the field of bioinformatics in Switzerland. Its mission is to provide essential IT services for the community of life sciences, particularly in terms of databases, software, web servers and computing, as well as support for data analysis, both nationally internationally. The SIB also provides first class education and research bioinformatics. It has a long tradition in the development of advanced software for research in life sciences, as well as in the support of high information content databases, such as UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot, the global benchmark in terms of knowledge proteins. The SIB brings together 46 internationally recognized research and service groups in the
fields of proteomics, transcriptomics, genomics, systems biology, structural bioinformatics, evolutionary bioinformatics, biophysics and population genetics, in Basel, Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Lugano and Zurich. The SIB is an internationally recognized partner and its services are used by Life Sciences researchers worldwide.

www.isb-sib.ch

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