Multi MERCI® Trial Demonstrates Better Outcomes for Patients Suffering Ischemic Stroke

Wednesday, February 21, 2007, Summit, NJ - Results of the Multi MERCI trial were reported February 13 at the International Stroke Conference in San Francisco. In the Multi MERCI trial, more than two thirds of ischemic stroke patients treated had restoration of blood flow, correlating with better outcomes. The trial was sponsored by Concentric Medical, the only company offering devices cleared by FDA for clot removal in ischemic stroke patients. Ischemic strokes occur as a result of an obstruction within a blood vessel supplying blood to the brain and accounts for about 85 percent of all stroke cases.

“We are extremely grateful to all the physicians and staff at participating centers that made this trial a success”, said Gary Curtis, President and CEO of Concentric Medical. “The original MERCI trial, and now the Multi MERCI trial, are two of the most successful acute ischemic stroke device trials, resulting in FDA clearances and commercial availability of new options for patients.”

The Multi MERCI trial utilized the Merci® Retrieval System, a "corkscrew-type" device that is delivered into the brain using standard catheterization techniques. The Merci Retriever is designed to restore blood flow by engaging, capturing and removing blood clots which cause ischemic stroke.

In 2006, Atlantic Health’s Overlook Hospital in Summit, NJ was the only hospital in New Jersey to offer the Merci Retrieval System to patients suffering an acute ischemic stroke.

“As a comprehensive stroke center for the region, we are excited to offer this innovative and highly technical treatment to stroke patients,” said Ronald Benitez, MD, a neurosurgeon at Overlook Hospital’s Atlantic Neuroscience Institute. “Our ability to offer this technology has increased the number of quick transfers by air or ambulance from other medical centers throughout the state.” In 2006, Overlook Hospital treated approximately 500 stroke cases, including ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes, and transient ischemic attacks.

Results of the trial further underscore the importance of restoring blood flow in patients suffering an ischemic stroke. The overall revascularization rate of 68.3% is the highest among any major acute ischemic stroke trial.

Multi MERCI was a multi-center, prospective trial including 164 patients treated at 15 hospitals in the United States and Canada. All patients had moderate-to-severe, large vessel strokes. When looking at the natural history, the prognosis for many of these stroke patients is poor, with the rate of death ranging from 35 to 90%.

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For Immediate Release
The trial included patients who were ineligible for or had failed treatment with a clot-dissolving drug called t-PA. Many of these large vessel strokes have a large clot burden which may make it difficult for clot-dissolving drugs to be effective. Treatment was initiated within eight hours of stroke symptom onset, which is beyond the three-hour treatment window for intravenous clot-dissolving drugs.

**Stroke Facts**

Stroke is the number one leading cause of disability and is the third leading cause of death worldwide. It is estimated that there are 750,000 strokes in the United States each year, of which 85 percent are ischemic. An ischemic stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain is blocked by a blood clot, which can impair brain function and cause severe disability or death.

**About the Stroke Center at Overlook Hospital**

Located in Summit, New Jersey, the comprehensive Stroke Center at Overlook Hospital, part of Atlantic Health and the Atlantic Neuroscience Institute (www.atlantichealth.org), offers the most advanced technology available anywhere in New Jersey. Some of the groundbreaking technology now in use at Overlook includes: the Siemens Neurostar – the only dedicated biplane neuroangiography suite in the area. The Neurostar provides images of the brain from multiple angles at the same time to help physicians quickly identify and clear blocked arteries. Another technology is the Merci® Retrieval System. Overlook is the only hospital in New Jersey to use this technology to remove potentially deadly blood clots through a tiny incision.

Other methods to treat stroke include intra-arterial thrombolysis, minimally invasive aneurysm treatment, intracranial angioplasty and stenting, carotid angioplasty and stenting, and a multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of arteriovenous malformations.

The Stroke Center at Overlook Hospital has earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ for stroke care by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and has been certified as a Primary Stroke Center.

**About Concentric Medical**

Located in Mountain View, California, and founded in 1999, Concentric Medical is dedicated to "Putting STROKE in Reverse". The company manufacturers and markets the Merci Retrieval Systems, the only interventional devices cleared by the FDA for clot retrieval in acute ischemic stroke. Concentric Medical has a full pipeline of new products to continue to advance the treatment options for ischemic stroke patients. The Merci Retrieval System is available in over 225 centers in North America and in leading stroke centers around the world. Concentric Medical estimates that over 4,500 patients have been treated with the device. More information about Concentric Medical and its products can be found at http://www.concentric-medical.com.

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