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Clinical Study Shows New Technology Improves Elderly Balance

Afferent Corporation's Neurotherapeutic Technology Used in Pilot Research

Providence, RI, October 3, 2003 – Afferent Corporation today announced positive results from clinical research that tested the Company's technology as a means to improve elderly balance. Being published in the October 4th issue of *The Lancet*, the research was conducted at Boston University in collaboration with Prof. James J. Collins, Co-Director of BU's Center for BioDynamics, and Dr. Lewis Lipsitz of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA.

Falls constitute one of the biggest health concerns for the elderly. Each year in the U.S., 1/3 of people over age 65 experience a fall, and 20–30% of these falls result in serious injury such as hip fracture or head trauma.

The recent research focused on the role that foot-sole pressure sensation plays in maintaining upright posture. The normal aging process reduces foot-sole sensitivity, and the use of low-level mechanical stimulation was tested as a way to directly counteract that problem. Twenty-seven elderly and young volunteers stood on prototype insoles that stimulated foot-sole sensory nerves. Measures of balance were made while stimulation was on and off. The presence of stimulation significantly improved subject's balance in both age groups.

"Demonstrating the ability of sub-sensory stimulation to improve balance in this preliminary study is a key step to developing products that can address the problem of elderly falls," said Jason Harry, Ph.D., President and CEO of Afferent. "With costs to treat fall-related injuries exceeding \$20 billion annually in the U.S. alone, this technology promises not only to improve the health and mobility of the elderly but also to reduce the resulting financial burden on the healthcare system." Afferent is exclusive licensee of BU's sensory enhancement technology patents. Supported in part by grant funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Company will continue to advance development of product prototypes and to test them in larger subject groups in increasingly challenging lifestyle situations.

About Afferent Corporation

Afferent Corporation, based in Providence, Rhode Island, is pioneering the development of a new class of medical devices to treat chronic neurological dysfunction. Its lead technology enhances the function of mechanoreceptor cells involved in sensory perception as a means of restoring brain function following stroke, addressing complications resulting from diabetic neuropathy, and improving elderly balance. Afferent's development efforts are being pursued in collaboration with leading biomedical and clinical researchers throughout the United States and Canada. Building on this technology platform, Afferent aims to establish a leadership position in the emerging field of neurotherapeutic devices.