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Study Demonstrates Expanded Clinical Utility for Sensory Enhancement Insoles

Afferent Corporation's Neurotechnology Improves Balance in People With Diabetes and Stroke

Providence, RI, January 23, 2006—Afferent Corporation today announced publication of research results pertaining to use of the Company's technology to improve balance in patients suffering from stroke and peripheral neuropathy due to diabetes. Researchers from Boston University, led by Prof. James Collins, conducted the study in collaboration with Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. The study showed that prototypes of the Company's sensory enhancement insoles significantly reduced sway and improved balance in these patient groups, with more severe patients showing greater improvement. Appearing in the January issue of the leading clinical journal *Annals of Neurology*, these findings build on results previously published in *The Lancet* and *Diabetes Care* and further demonstrate that Afferent's technology is broadly applicable for treating diminished sensory function.

Impaired balance and risk of falling are problematic for many people recovering from stroke or living with diabetes. About 40% of stroke survivors experience serious falls within a year of stroke, and those who fall are four times more likely to suffer a hip fracture. A recent study by researchers at Columbia University showed that participants with diabetes were about two-and-a-half times more likely to fall than those without the disease and concluded that diabetes is an independent risk factor for falls among elderly nursing home residents. Diabetic neuropathy is a likely driver for the difference between the two groups.

In this new pilot clinical study, supported by research grants from the National Institutes of Health (NICHD, NIA, and NIDDK) and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), 15 diabetic neuropathy and 15 stroke patients received subsensory vibratory mechanical stimulation delivered to the soles of the feet in a series of trials. The amount of sway while standing was measured in the presence and absence of stimulation. Stimulation significantly reduced each of eight sway parameters in both groups of patients. Furthermore, patients with the highest level of baseline sway showed the greatest improvements in balance control in the presence of stimulation.

Commenting on the results of the study, Aristidis Veves, M.D. of the Joslin-Beth Israel Deaconess Foot Center stated, "At present there is little to offer patients who suffer from sensory loss due to diabetes. This is an important step in creating devices that could address this highly prevalent health problem." Joel Stein, M.D., Chief Medical Officer at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital added, "Falls are a big issue for stroke survivors. Any technology that offers a way to improve balance is of great interest to the clinical community that works with these patients."

Jason Harry, Ph.D., President and CEO of Afferent Corporation, said, “This study further demonstrates the broad utility of our platform neurotechnology. We are aggressively pursuing product development and further clinical testing for these and other applications.”

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 addressing complications resulting from diabetic neuropathy, restoring brain function following stroke, and improving elderly balance. Afferent’s development efforts are being pursued in collaboration with leading biomedical and clinical researchers throughout the United States. Building on this technology platform, Afferent aims to establish a leadership position in the emerging field of neurotherapeutic devices.