



Stem Cells for Safer Medicines

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## SC4SM appoints new Chief Executive

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Professor Frank Bonner is to be the new chief executive of Stem Cells for Safer Medicines (SC4SM), the public-private partnership whose aim is to develop stem cell technology for use in early stage medicine testing.

A toxicologist who specialises in the application of new technologies for predictive toxicity screening and a former president of the British Toxicology Society, Prof. Bonner is an expert in the field covered by SC4SM.

Commenting on his appointment, Prof Bonner paid tribute to his predecessor Dr Philip Wright. He said: "Philip has done a great job in getting SC4SM off the ground and building it up to where it is today.

"I am delighted to have this opportunity to be involved in such a fascinating arena and look forward to being associated with the development of novel predictive models with the potential to improve the discovery of new drugs".

Dr Richard Barker, Director-General of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry and chair of the SC4SM board, said: "We are delighted to welcome Frank as chief executive. He is uniquely, well qualified to lead us through to the next stage of development."

Prof Bonner will fulfil the responsibility of his new role alongside his work as an independent consultant in toxicology and non-clinical drug safety assessment. He currently supports a wide variety of pharmaceutical, biotechnology and platform technology companies and is a member of the Scientific Advisory Boards of several companies. He was appointed Visiting Professor in the Institute of Cellular Medicine at Newcastle University in January, 2009.

ENDS

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **Frank Bonner, BSc, PhD, FBTS**

Frank obtained a BSc degree in Biochemistry and a PhD in Toxicology from the University of Surrey, Guildford. Since that time, he has gained over 25 years experience of the pharmaceutical and contract research industries through a variety of operational roles and consultancy. His appointments include Senior Vice

President and UK Director of Pre-Clinical Development for Sterling Research and latterly, Sanofi.

Frank is a Fellow of the British Toxicology Society and has served in a variety of capacities in the society, including President. He has also participated on a number of national committees of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry including the Research and Development Committee and Drug Safety Working Group.

During his career, he has been involved in the development of a wide variety of pharmaceutical products and is experienced in the international drug regulatory process. He has particular interest in mechanistic toxicology and the application of new technologies for predictive toxicology screening. He also has a long standing interest in the application of metabolomics to monitor and understand pathogenesis and for biomarker discovery and was involved in early collaborative work in the 1980's to pioneer the development of NMR spectroscopy to investigate target organ toxicities.

## **SC4SM**

SC4SM is a public-private collaboration, launched by Science Minister Ian Pearson in October 2007. Its aim is to develop stem cell technology for use at an early stage in safety testing, in order to eliminate new drug candidates which may have potential side-effects in humans, before animal or human trials are conducted.

The partnership seeks to establish open protocols and standards in stem cell differentiation for use in medicines testing, and works with industry and academia to achieve this. It adheres to an ethical policy in the sourcing of stem cells, and it does not work on regenerative medicine.

SC4SM is funded by three pharmaceutical companies – GlaxoSmithKline, AstraZeneca and Hoffman-La Roche; and five Government partners – the Department of Health, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, the Scottish Government, the Medical Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.