

WALTHAM, Mass., April 23, 2008 /PRNewswire-USNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Nonprofit has collected 1,000 blood and data samples from MS sufferers and controls across the U.S.: Samples will be used in dozens of individual research studies this year

Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis, a national nonprofit organization, today announced that they have completed their initial drive to collect one thousand blood and data samples to build the largest openly accessible, multi-disciplinary repository ever assembled for use in Multiple Sclerosis (MS: 50.39, +3.01, +6.35%) research.

"This is a major milestone for the Accelerated Cure Project", says Art Mellor, founder of the Accelerated Cure Project. "Limited sample size is one of the most frequently cited reasons for inconclusive results in MS research. Our repository provides researchers with immediate access to a far greater number of samples than most scientists could collect themselves."

In addition, the repository will provide a common population of samples useful for a wide variety of different studies, which will enable results from different research perspectives to be easily combined and correlated. The repository contains various types of samples and data that can support scientists working in many fields - genetics, nutrition, virology, and more. Researchers gaining access to the repository must return their results to the database to be shared with other researchers; this will allow cross-correlation of their results with all other studies performed using the same samples.

Subjects enrolled in the repository will be followed over time to allow new samples to be taken and to record important changes in clinical status. Studying the same sample population over time, and pooling knowledge in a central database, is a major step toward understanding what causes MS, thereby accelerating a cure.

Additionally, samples and data are collected from a number of other similar diseases including Transverse Myelitis, Neuromyelitis Optica, ADEM, and Optic Neuritis to enable studies in these rare neurological disorders and to provide controls for MS studies.

#### Collection Sites

Contributing to the success of the project is an impressive list of research centers across the country that have joined Accelerated Cure Project as collection sites for the repository. These include Johns Hopkins Medical Center (Baltimore, MD), University of Massachusetts Memorial Medical Center (Worcester, MA), University of Texas Southwestern (Dallas, TX), Multiple Sclerosis Research Center of New York (New York, NY), Barrow Neurological Institute (Phoenix, AZ) and the Shepherd Center (Atlanta, GA).

The Accelerated Cure Project intends to continue collecting samples from as many as 10,000 subjects for its MS Repository. If you have MS (or another demyelinating disease) or are related to someone with MS and would like to participate in the project, please call 781/487-0008, visit [acceleratedcure.org/repository](http://acceleratedcure.org/repository), or send an email to [info-web1207@acceleratedcure.org](mailto:info-web1207@acceleratedcure.org).

#### About Accelerated Cure Project

Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis, [www.acceleratedcure.org](http://www.acceleratedcure.org), is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to curing Multiple Sclerosis (MS: 50.39, +3.01, +6.35%) by determining its causes. Accelerated Cure Project believes this effort can be accelerated by organizing the research process and encouraging collaboration between research organizations and clinicians. A "Cure Map" is currently being developed by the Accelerated Cure Project to establish what is known and what is not known about the causes of MS. From the Cure Map, Accelerated Cure Project will facilitate research most likely to reveal the causes of MS in the shortest time through a large-scale, multidisciplinary, MS Repository. For more information about the Accelerated Cure Project or to make a corporate or individual donation, call 781/487-0008, visit [acceleratedcure.org](http://acceleratedcure.org), or send an email to [info-web1207@acceleratedcure.org](mailto:info-web1207@acceleratedcure.org).

#### About Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic demyelinating disorder of the central nervous system that often results in severe disability including the inability to walk, blindness, cognitive dysfunction, extreme fatigue and other

serious symptoms. MS affects over 400,000 people in the US and 2 million individuals worldwide. The disorder occurs twice as often in women as in men. The cause is not known and there is no known cure.

SOURCE Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis