

CBSA BioBreakfast Focuses on Two CO Success Stories of 2009

May 21, 2010



CBSA's May BioBreakfast allowed two of Colorado's 2009 Bioscience success stories to share their stories. First up was Paul Beresford of **Biodesix**, a company playing in the diagnostic space. Instead of focusing on evaluating a single analyte to diagnose disease, Biodesix seeks to predict treatment response through the evaluation of many analytes run through an algorithm. The company's ProTS platform uses mass spectrometry. The first test developed from this platform, VeriStrat was launched in May of 2009. VeriStrat helps to identify patients expected to have more favorable outcomes from second line treatment on lung cancer with erlotinib (Tarceva). The test, which is run in Biodesix' CLIA certified lab in Aurora, requires only a blood sample and not a tumor sample. The company is working to simplify sample collection even further such that blood can be spotted directly on a card for shipment to the lab. Biodesix also continues to strengthen its data package and is currently conducting a prospective study in Italy to supplement the information from previous retrospective studies. Beresford commented on the need to build a sales force to communicate with oncologists that looks more like that of a pharmaceutical company than that of a traditional diagnostic company. Along with commercializing VeriStrat, Biodesix continues to develop additional tests from its platform independently and as companion diagnostics.

Dr. Tim Rodell of **GlobelImmune** presented next. Rodell noted that in May 2009 GlobelImmune signed a partnership that included a \$40M upfront payment and potential for up to \$500 in milestone payments for its oncology programs and GI-4000. Rodell, however, spent most of his time discussing developments related to GI-5005, a treatment in clinical trials for Hepatitis C, a program that GlobelImmune continues to pursue independently. GlobelImmune's tarmogens (Targeted Molecular Immunogen) generate a very strong T-cell response. This immune response is essential to clear the liver of Hepatitis C infection. While other drugs like interferon and ribavirin can suppress virus replication, the virus will return when treatment is stopped in the absence of immune response. In trials comparing ribavirin/interferon (current standard of care) to ribavirin/interferon/GI-5005, patients receiving the triple therapy were more likely to achieve sustained virologic response (virus free 6 months after treatment is stopped). Rodell noted that GI-5005 could likely also serve as complimentary therapy to any of the small molecule anti-virals in development should the standard of care change in the future.