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### **Study of Adult Stem Cells in the Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis Begins in Charleston**

D-Finitive Technologies, Inc. has announced that a preliminary phase of animal testing of transfected adult stem cells is now underway that may lead to advances in the treatment of Multiple Sclerosis.

Approximately 400,000 people in the U.S. and 2.5 million people worldwide suffer from MS, an autoimmune disease in which the myelin sheath that surrounds and protects the nerve fibers of the central nervous system is lost. Myelin tissue helps nerves conduct the electrical impulses to and from the brain. When it is lost, the nerve fibers become damaged, destroyed or scarred, causing the various symptoms of MS to occur.

While it is not yet known what causes the myelin sheath to be attacked, some experts speculate that it may be the result of genetics, gender, environmental factors, viruses and/or bacteria. While little is really known or understood about MS, some evidence suggests that cord blood stem cells could be used to replace or repair the lost myelin. The testing now underway may shed new light on the use of adult stem cells in the battle against this devastating disease.

Roger R. Markwald, Ph. D., who chairs the department of Cell Biology and Anatomy at the Medical University of South Carolina, notes that extensive research is being conducted around the world to study the application of adult stem cells to over 70 diseases. The use of adult stem cells, such as those derived from cord blood, does not involve the legal, moral or philosophic issues of embryonic stem cells in which human fetuses are aborted or created in a laboratory and then destroyed.

“Research on stem cells is advancing rapidly, and stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood are emerging as the first choice for the field of regenerative medicine,” states Markwald, a distinguished university professor and member of the D-Finitive Technologies Board of Advisors.

D-Finitive Technologies, a Charleston-based privately owned company, collaborates with researchers at institutions around the world to promote and foster the study of cord blood stem cells for use in treating human disease.