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**PIEDMONT MEDICAL GROUP (PMG) PARTNERS WITH
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**

Collaboration represents groundbreaking industry model for conducting clinical trials

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. – July 20, 2009 – Piedmont Medical Group (PMG), a leader in the clinical research industry with an experienced Integrated Site Network (ISN) of clinical research facilities, and East Tennessee State University (ETSU), a Carnegie Foundation-designated doctoral/research-intensive institution in Johnson City, TN, today announced an agreement that marks a unique collaboration between a private research company and a university to conduct clinical research. As part of this agreement, PMG opened its 11th clinical research site, East Tennessee Medical Research (ETMR).

This collaboration is unique to the industry in that it represents a collaboration between a private company and a university to utilize best practices and resources to facilitate the clinical trial process. PMG's proven business model of managing clinical trials along with ETSU's multi-specialty resources are expected to be driving forces behind a successful clinical trial operation. PMG and ETSU expect this powerful combination to help forge progress in clinical trial capabilities and help meet industry challenges, such as maintaining a pool of qualified research physicians and bridging the relationship between industry needs and access to patient volunteers.

The new ETMR facility will initially focus on new, more complex, and much needed areas of study, including HIV/Infectious Disease. HIV/Infectious Disease is an important new study area for PMG. The need for this type of research is critical within the industry, but trials are not widespread because investigators for HIV studies, for example, are difficult to find and they are a more complex type of trial to run. Having faculty in ETSU's Division of Infectious Diseases involved, plus the location and capabilities of their facility, make these more complex types of studies possible.

PMG plans for additional specialist and therapeutic areas to be added in the future to meet industry needs and patient volunteer interests. ETMR is based on a multi-specialty physician network, opening the door for increased patient recruitment capabilities. ETMR is continuing to add personnel, and will operate under the same oversight and successful business model as existing PMG facilities – assuring quality of work and quick study turnaround.

“Our landmark agreement with ETSU is remarkable in its benefits for both parties and for clinical trials. We’re privileged to be working with them,” says Dr. Thomas W. Littlejohn, III, President and Medical Director of PMG and leading U.S. Principal Investigator. Littlejohn adds, “For the industry, we hope this agreement will stand as an example of the great things that can happen when private companies and universities work together.”

Dr. William R. Duncan is the Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs at ETSU. “We’re looking forward to working with PMG and the ETMR staff. Their experience in attracting and managing clinical trials will complement our clinical expertise and greatly facilitate the participation of ETSU faculty in this line of research.”

Dr. Felix A. Sarubbi is the Director of the ETSU HIV/AIDS Care Center of Excellence Program. His colleagues in the ETSU Division of Infectious Diseases and the Center of Excellence staff are optimistic about the relationship with PMG which should bring about studies that can offer significant benefits to a challenging patient population.

About PMG

Piedmont Medical Group (PMG) is an Integrated Site Network (ISN) of clinical research facilities. Our progressive organization is comprised of a team of highly effective professionals and a network of specially-designed sites. Our goal is to provide exceptional services to our sponsors and participants. With extensive experience across all phases of clinical trials, PMG has conducted 5,000 research studies for 100 pharmaceutical sponsors and CRO’s. Visit us at www.pmg-research.com.

About East Tennessee State University

East Tennessee State University (ETSU), a Carnegie Foundation-designated doctoral/research-intensive institution, pursues its mission through a student-centered community of learning reflecting high standards and promoting a balance of liberal arts and professional preparation. ETSU serves some 12,000 students and offers almost 200 programs of study in eight colleges and schools. ETSU serves the region's business community, P-12 and postsecondary educational systems, government agencies, health care systems, and general public. ETSU is committed to service that strengthens the region and, in turn, enriches its students, faculty, and staff. More information about East Tennessee State University is available at www.etsu.edu.

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