



## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 19, 2016

### The Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

OMAHA, Neb. – The Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT) is proud to announce its 20th year as the leading organization in standards setting and accreditation for cellular therapy, hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, and regenerative medicine.

With two decades of leadership experience, FACT is a dynamic, internationally recognized accrediting body for healthcare institutions offering hematopoietic stem cell transplants, cord blood banking, and other cellular therapies. “FACT has evolved from the first accreditation standards developed by committed volunteers to a highly professional organization that has inspected and accredited almost all North American hematopoietic stem cell transplant units, and is extending its reach to other cell therapies and to international collaborations,” states Helen Heslop, MD, President of the FACT Board of Directors.

FACT will kick off its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at the 2016 BMT Tandem Meetings in Honolulu, Hawaii. Founding members of the Board of Directors will be honored at the Awards Ceremony for their pivotal contributions to quality medical care and laboratory practices in cellular therapy.

FACT was founded in 1996 to meet the need for professional standards across the field of hematopoietic cell transplantation. In a unique collaboration, the physician and scientist members of the American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation joined the laboratory scientists of the International Society for Cellular Therapy to form FACT as their standard setting and accrediting organization. FACT Chief Medical Officer, Phyllis Warkentin, MD, led the development of the FACT accreditation process based upon the consensus Standards of experts in the field. “Since the beginning, FACT standards-setting and accreditation processes have been successful because of the commitment of experts and their willingness to participate as peers to raise the quality across providers, protect the research environment, and advance the field,” says Dr. Warkentin.

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The first edition of FACT Standards was adopted by JACIE, the Joint Accreditation Committee of ISCT and European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation. Subsequently, JACIE members have become equal partners in standards development while maintaining a parallel accreditation process. FACT next collaborated with the International NetCord Foundation, a worldwide group of leading cord blood banking experts, to establish standards and accreditation in cord blood banking. “The global nature of FACT accreditation provides a surety that all products and processes generated by a FACT-accredited program meet the same minimum standards of quality, thereby providing confidence in the cross-border exchange of products for cellular therapies,” says Ngairé Elwood, PhD, FACT Board Member and inspector.

Under the direction of a volunteer Board of Directors and FACT Chief Executive Officer Linda Miller, MPA, FACT has accredited over 270 organizations in 23 countries on five continents and has published six editions of Hematopoietic Cellular Therapy Standards and five editions of Cord Blood Banking Standards. FACT accreditation serves as a benchmark for multi-site clinical trial organizations, governmental authorities, insurance companies, and donor registries, making quality cellular therapy increasingly available to patients. In 2015, the first edition of *FACT Common Standards for Cellular Therapies* was published for the burgeoning fields of clinical research and regenerative medicine utilizing novel cellular therapies.

“We mark 20 years of collaboration of ISCT and ASBMT in the form of FACT and the promotion of excellent care for our patients throughout the BMT community,” remarks FACT President-elect Dennis Gastineau, MD. “We look forward to the evolution of new therapies supported by the shared knowledge of colleagues and the assurance that we will continue to seek the best for our patients.”