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PROLACTA BIOSCIENCE COMMENDS SENATOR FEINSTEIN AND COLLEAGUES FOR EFFORTS TO REDUCE PREEMIE DEATHS

Senator Dianne Feinstein Calls for Increased Prevention of Fatal Diseases Among Very Low Birth Weight Babies

CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA., JUNE 23, 2014 – Prolacta Bioscience, Inc. (Prolacta) today applauded the efforts of several U.S. Senators, led by Senator Dianne Feinstein, D-CA, to increase awareness of necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a dangerous intestinal disease to which very low birth weight babies in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) are highly susceptible.

Senator Feinstein, along with Senators Susan Collins, R-ME, Tom Harkin, D-IA, Brian Schatz, D-HI, Barbara Boxer, D-CA, Michael Bennett, D-CO, and Kay Hagan, D-NC, sent a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requesting that the agency work to determine best practices for the proactive prevention of NEC in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

“This devastating disease, which affects nearly 10 percent of very low birth weight babies, can have a mortality rate of 50 percent,” wrote the Senators. “We are particularly concerned about the Medicaid population, which has a disproportionate percentage of premature births. It is our understanding that medical interventions, which can significantly reduce the risk of infants developing NEC, exist, and we would like to understand what CMS is currently doing in this area.”

NEC is one of the leading causes of mortality among babies, and affects up to 1 in 6⁽ⁱ⁾ babies weighing less than 1250g at birth who receive cow milk-based components in their diet. The use of an exclusive 100 percent human milk diet has been proven to reduce the incidence of NEC in critically ill preemies born weighing 500-1250g. Today, however, most very low birth weight infants in NICUs still receive either cow-based formula, or human milk supplemented with cow-based formula.

In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published a policy statement on breastfeeding and the use of human milk, pointing to a reduction in the odds of developing the often fatal disease NEC in extremely preterm infants (those born weighing 500-1250g), when fed an exclusively human milk diet, as compared to those fed a diet including cow milk-based proteins.

“NEC is a debilitating and sadly, often fatal disease,” said Prolacta CEO Scott Elster. “This disease strikes extremely premature infants without warning, and the only clinically demonstrated way to significantly reduce the incidence and severity of NEC is the use of a 100 percent human milk diet. We are so thankful that Senator Feinstein is taking a leading role in protecting the health of these fragile newborns.”

The letter can be found at:

http://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve/?File_id=b008c675-77f7-432e-8560-a11b6467830b

About Prolacta Bioscience

Prolacta Bioscience, Inc. is a privately-held life sciences company dedicated to Advancing the Science of Human Milk®. The company pioneered the development of human milk-based nutritional products to meet the needs of critically ill, premature infants in the NICU and leads the industry in the quality and safety of nutritional products made from breast milk. Prolacta operates the first and only pharmaceutical-grade manufacturing facility for the processing of human breast milk. For more information please visit www.prolacta.com.

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ⁱ Combined NEC rates from the control arms in both Sullivan4 (11/69) and Cristofalo5 (5/24) studies.