



## Signal clinches maiden deal for gene profiling cancer test with Caris

By Tina Tan

**January 7, 2011** — Signal Genetics has enlisted Caris Life Sciences to sell its new gene expression profile test in the US. The test is used in patients with multiple myeloma, a cancer of the white blood cells.

This is the first commercial deal for Signal's MyPRS (myeloma prognostic risk signature) test since it was launched last month at the annual meeting of the American Society of Hematology, held in Orlando, Florida. Previously, the product was available only on a research basis, said Greg Richard, Signal's executive vice-president of commercial operations.

The test analyses and applies a proprietary algorithm to determine the patient's gene expression profile; this profile will then allow doctors to determine the patient's prognosis and prescribe more personalised, and therefore more effective, treatment.

According to Mr Richard, MyPRS is the only gene expression profile test for multiple myeloma currently on the market. "Several labs offer cytogenetic and FISH testing for these patients. The Mayo Clinic offers a multiple myeloma specific 'panel' called MSmart; however, it does not contain the gene expression profile uniquely provided by MyPRS," he said

Under the terms of the agreement, Caris has exclusive rights to offer MyPRS to community-based haematologists/oncologists in the US. Caris, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, will transport the patient specimen using its proprietary shipping kit and the MyPRS analysis will be performed at Signal's CLIA-certified lab at Little Rock, Arkansas. The test results will be incorporated into Caris's summary report.

The deal does not cover hospitals, Mr Richard told *Clinica*, and the company is still "actively seeking a partner to commercialise MyPRS with this constituency". "Our strategy is to launch the test with two or perhaps three commercial lab partners to make MyPRS the standard of care for all newly diagnosed or relapsed patients with multiple myeloma," he said. Around 20,000 new cases of the disease are diagnosed each year in the US.

A Caris spokesperson told *Clinica* that the partnership could potentially expand to include additional tests or services to the oncology/haematology outside the US.

The agreement also gives Caris the opportunity to access new, innovative technologies developed or licensed by Signal. It is said that Caris is currently reviewing a potential new test from Signal, but Mr Richard declined to provide further details.



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