Darmstadt, Germany, June 15, 2017 – Merck , a leading science and technology company, today announced an expansion of its distribution alliance with Public Health England (PHE) to include the European Bank of ***i***nduced pluripotent Stem Cells (EBiSC)—a comprehensive iPS cell bank of more than 300 quality-controlled, disease-relevant, patient-derived human iPSC lines.

- Merck to become global distributor of the European Bank of iPS Cells, excluding Japan
- Extension of relationship with Public Health England for global distribution of cost-efficient, authenticated cell lines

Merck provides a complete solution for the iPSC workflow, including novel reprogramming kits, iPSC culture media and stem cell antibodies and characterization kits. The addition of the EBiSC portfolio strengthens Merck's existing distribution relationship with PHE as a distributor of its European Collection of Authenticated Cell Cultures (ECACC) portfolio.

"This partnership will give customers greater access to a comprehensive suite of human iPSCs for disease modeling," said Udit Batra, Member of the Merck Executive Board and CEO, Life Science . "This is a great addition to our authenticated cell line portfolio and strengthens our offering across the iPSC workflow."

Under the terms of the agreement, Merck will employ its sales, marketing and e-commerce expertise to distribute the EBiSC Human iPS Cell Bank. The distribution agreement includes all geographies except Japan. Financial details were not disclosed.

Following the acquisition of Sigma-Aldrich by Merck in 2015, the global distribution agreement became an important part of Merck's life science business, driving growth in life science and offering premier brand tools for disease modeling and drug screening.

EBiSC is a European public-private partnership project designed to address the increasing demand by stem cell researchers for quality-controlled, disease-relevant, research-grade iPSC lines, data and cell services. Its goal is to establish a centralized European cell bank providing researchers across academia and industry with access to scalable, cost-efficient and

consistent high-quality tools for development of new medicines.

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About Merck

Merck is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck generated sales of €15 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck holds the global rights to the “Merck” name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.