



Bluegrass Vascular Announces Strategic Relationship with Merit Medical

Agreement Includes Equity Investment and Exclusive Rights to Distribute Innovative Surfacer® Inside-Out® Access Catheter System

SAN ANTONIO, March 6, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- [Bluegrass Vascular Technologies](#) (Bluegrass Vascular), a private medical technology company focused on innovating lifesaving devices and methods for vascular access procedures, announced today that it is entering into a strategic relationship with [Merit Medical Systems](#) (Merit Medical), a leading manufacturer and marketer of proprietary disposable devices. The agreement will streamline European distribution of the recently CE mark approved Surfacer® Inside-Out® Access Catheter System and will provide funding to support the company's efforts to secure FDA clearance for product sales in the U.S.

"We are very pleased to be partnering with Merit Medical, a prominent distributor of medical devices in Europe and the U.S. that shares the same vision of addressing the clinical gaps that exist in vascular access care for hemodialysis patients," stated Gabriele Niederauer, Ph.D., CEO and President of Bluegrass Vascular. "We are excited about Merit's choice to commercialize the innovative Surfacer System and deepen their superb customer relationships."

"The Surfacer System is an innovative Inside-Out approach to restore access to the right internal jugular vein and to preserve treatment options in hemodialysis patients with occluded veins," stated Fred Lampropoulos, Chairman and CEO of Merit Medical. "This unique approach addresses an unmet need in hemodialysis care and aligns with Merit's interventional portfolio, which includes the HeRO Graft, a complementary device designed to reduce catheter-associated complications and costs. We are very excited to bring this novel technology to market."

Central venous obstruction occurs in roughly 40% of instances where hemodialysis is being received by a central venous catheter.¹ While permanent arteriovenous fistulas (AVFs) are the preferred form of vascular access for hemodialysis patients, central venous catheters continue to serve as an important bridge to securing long-term access for life-saving hemodialysis treatment. The current approach for most patients with central venous occlusions is to use an alternative vein, which reduces the ability to place and mature a functioning fistula, resulting in increased catheter days and costs.

The Surfacer Inside-Out Access Catheter System provides reliable, efficient and repeatable central venous access to the right internal jugular (RIJ) vein, the optimal location for placing a central venous catheter. By securing safe and repeatable central venous access to the RIJ, the Surfacer System allows physicians to "avoid going left", thereby protecting AVF placement for better patient outcomes and improved health economics for both hospitals and hemodialysis providers.

About Bluegrass Vascular Technologies

Bluegrass Vascular Technologies is a medical technology company dedicated to developing and commercializing lifesaving devices and methods that address shortcomings in vascular access procedures. For more information, please visit www.bluegrassvascular.com.

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