Setting The International Standard For Handling Human Biomaterials

Wayne State University

Using human biological samples for research has always been somewhat difficult because there has been no centralized and standardized method for acquisition, processing and data. Because of this, researchers have largely depended on animal testing for early stage drug development — which does not always yield the same results as human testing. To make the use of human biomaterials more viable, researchers at Wayne State University in Detroit, Mich. have developed standardized technologies and procedures for the collection, preservation and processing of human tissue samples and associated data for use in biomedical research.

These technologies and procedures were developed from 2000 to 2006 through a partnership between Wayne State University and Asterand, a high-tech startup company founded by Oxford Biosciences Partners and Randal Charlton.

Initial funding was approximately $500,000; subsequent rounds of funding totaled $14 million.

Asterand and Wayne State University developed procedures, technologies, and tools for all aspects of human sample collection. This includes forms for paperwork, the logistics of bringing collection protocols to review boards for approval, and patient screening.

> *Research groups worked together to define standard methods for characterizing tissue histopathology, molecular integrity and clinical data components.*

Wayne State University's Office of Technology Commercialization has entered into a number of collaborative agreements with Asterand that involve hospitals and collection facilities. Through this consistent, standardized handling of human biomaterials, scientists around the world can now conduct their research in a more efficient way, which will enhance the discovery and commercialization process.

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