

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Eversight partners with Emmecell biotech to advance ocular cell therapies**

ANN ARBOR, Mich. and MENLO PARK, Calif., Feb. 20, 2024 — [Eversight](#), a leading global nonprofit eye bank, and [Emmecell](#), a private clinical-stage biotechnology company, today announced a partnership to advance cell therapies for the treatment of eye disease through their shared commitment to curing blindness worldwide.

Currently, the only way to restore sight to patients with advanced cases of corneal edema due to endothelial cell dysfunction is by cornea transplant. Emmecell’s minimally invasive cell therapy injects healthy corneal endothelial cells obtained from donor corneas into the eye to repopulate the patient’s diseased cornea with functioning endothelial cells, potentially eliminating the need for transplantation.

“One donor cornea can restore vision to one recipient eye through transplantation—a miraculous gift,” said Diane Hollingsworth, President/CEO, Eversight. “If in the future we can provide healthy endothelial cells from a donor cornea for cell therapy, that donor has the potential to restore vision in many more patients, maximizing their gift far beyond a single cornea transplant. As stewards of the gift of sight, Eversight is proud to partner with Emmecell to advance this promising therapy.”

Corneal endothelial cells from a single donor tissue could be amplified using Emmecell’s technology to restore vision for hundreds of patients via injectable cell therapy. To date, cell therapies that replace or enhance damaged tissue often have been limited by the inability to localize treatment to the site of injury or disease. Using a proprietary [Magnetic Cell Delivery \(MCD\) nanoparticle platform](#), Emmecell solves the therapeutic challenges of delivery, retention and integration of healthy donor cells.

“Emmecell’s mission is to bring innovative regenerative medicine out of the laboratory and into patient care,” said Jeffrey L. Goldberg, MD, PhD, Emmecell co-founder and chair of the Byers Eye Institute at Stanford. “We are confident that Eversight’s eye banking expertise, global impact, commitment to research and surgeon education, and history of innovation and leadership in their field will help further harness the power of the Emmecell platform to cure blindness for more people worldwide.”

Through the generosity of eye donors and their families, Eversight provided 8,954 corneas for sight-restoring transplantation in 2023, of which 3,525 were distributed in 29 countries outside the United States. While there is no wait to receive a cornea transplant in the U.S., it is estimated that there is just one cornea available per 70 patients who need a life-changing transplant globally.<sup>1</sup> Alternative cell therapies made possible by Emmecell’s technology have the potential to transform more lives in developing countries without the need for local eye banking infrastructure or imported donor tissue.

–continued–

---

<sup>1</sup> Gain P, Jullienne R, He Z, et al. Global Survey of Corneal Transplantation and Eye Banking. JAMA Ophthalmol. 2016;134(2):167–173. [doi:10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2015.4776](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2015.4776)

U.S. patients may be eligible to enroll in Emmecell's minimally invasive, multicenter, phase 1B clinical trial for the treatment of corneal edema: [NCT04894110](#). If proven safe and effective, Emmecell's EO2002 therapy could eliminate the need for corneal transplantation in thousands of people in the U.S. annually and give the gift of sight to many more worldwide. Corneal specialists interested in enrolling patients can call 650-769-4232 or email [clinicaltrials@emmecell.com](mailto:clinicaltrials@emmecell.com).

### **About Eversight**

Eversight is a nonprofit organization with a mission to restore sight and prevent blindness through the healing power of donation, transplantation and research. The Eversight network is responsible for recovering, evaluating and providing human eye tissue for transplantation; supporting research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions; promoting donation awareness through public and professional education; and providing humanitarian aid to people around the world in need of corneal transplantation. Operating in Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio and South Korea, Eversight works in collaboration with surgeons, researchers, academic medical centers and eye banks across the United States and abroad. For more information, visit [eversightvision.org](http://eversightvision.org).

### **About Emmecell**

Emmecell is a privately held, clinical-stage biotechnology company pioneering the discovery and development of cell-based therapies for the treatment of eye diseases via its exclusive [Magnetic Cell Delivery \(MCD\) nanoparticle platform](#). MCD solves the challenges of delivery, retention and integration of cell therapies by leveraging magnetic nanoparticles to effectively localize and integrate cell therapies to the appropriate target tissue. Headquartered in Menlo Park, Calif., Emmecell has a broad IP portfolio and is focusing its initial efforts on [ophthalmic indications](#), including corneal edema and macular degeneration. For more information, visit [emmecell.com](http://emmecell.com).

###