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PharmaLegacy's First Year; Accredited by AAALAC

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On October 1, 2009, two weeks before it celebrated its one-year anniversary, PharmaLegacy was granted full accreditation from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) for its pre-clinical animal lab. Shanghai-based PharmaLegacy is a CRO dedicated to preclinical pharmacology, with special expertise in three major disease areas, three major disease areas: bone/orthopedic research, inflammation/immune diseases, and oncology.

Reflecting on the first year of operation in an exclusive communication with ChinaBio® Today, CEO Darren Ji PhD said, "Two distinct PharmaLegacy service features have received repeated compliments from clients: the BioBook electronic data management system (FDA Part 11 compliant) that allows remote and real-time access to data through a Virtual Private Network (VPN), and the video streaming capability that provides remote, real-time monitoring of operation details around the world." PharmaLegacy has 70 cameras in its facilities to provide this latter feature.

Also, Ji told Nature Biotechnology/Drug Discovery Review that 60% of the company's proposals are accepted. PharmaLegacy has 20 clients, eight of whom are among the world's top twenty biopharmas.

As other CROs have also noted, PharmaLegacy recognizes that its services must be more than a less-expensive alternative to other CROs. The company must become a partner in the research process, adding its knowledge to the design and execution of the project. Also, PharmaLegacy strives to take advantage of its specialized knowledge to deliver reliable and consistent results, something that is difficult to achieve in pharmacology studies. If PharmaLegacy does this, the client benefits because the project's turnaround times are shortened.

In an earlier interview with ChinaBio® Today (see article), CEO Ji explained how PharmaLegacy decided to focus on pharmacology. "[The founders] wanted to do something in the biotech industry in China," he said. "We saw the biotech industry growing, and we saw that China has the potential to help pharma bring new drugs to market. But the one missing piece in the CRO world was pharmacology." By filling that void, the founders felt they could provide a benefit to the greater China biopharma industry.

Ji feels that PharmaLegacy is relatively protected as China loses its cost advantage because of the company's unique pharmacological niche.

"There are many CROs in Shanghai, many chemistry-based companies, and big integrated enterprises as well," Ji pointed out. "We are the only one dedicated to pharmacology service. We are so specialty based and aspire to provide the best and nothing but the best customer services to our clients. We like to think of ourselves as a little boutique, just around the corner, while there are big department stores down the street. The boutiques provide custom services," he concluded.

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