



## **Singaporeans more receptive to cord blood banking**

*- StemCord roadshow sees unprecedented sign-ups*

**Singapore, 27 July 2006** – StemCord Pte Ltd, the first private cord blood bank to be licensed by the Singapore Ministry of Health, has observed greater awareness and acceptance among Singaporeans in considering cord blood banking as a form of biological insurance.

In a recent three-day roadshow held from 21 to 23 July 2006 at Suntec City Entertainment Atrium (outside Carrefour), over 600 new customers signed up with StemCord to bank their children's cord blood. This marks a significant milestone for StemCord. In just three days, it has achieved close to a 10 per cent increase in customer base.

Dr Ang Peng Tiam, Director and Co-Founder of StemCord, said: "There is definitely a change in mindset. More are considering cord blood banking as an integral part of the overall lifestyle choice for their family. In the first year of StemCord's operation, we have only 800 customers and now we have managed to achieve the same result in just three days."

Cord blood is a rich source of stem cells, and stem cell transplant now represents a very important milestone in medicine as it can provide a cure in some diseases, unlike other treatment options, which can only provide temporary relief. However, there is only one chance to harvest cord blood as a biological insurance – at the birth of a newborn child.

StemCord also attributes the trend to greater affordability. It currently costs less than 70 cents a day to bank a child's cord blood. Set up in March 2002, the company now has over 7,000 samples (excluding the new sign-ups) stored at its laboratory in Singapore Science Park, making it the largest cord blood bank in Singapore.

One key reason customers chose StemCord as their preferred bank is because the cord blood banked with the company is stored in multiple vials. It is an emphasis of StemCord, from the beginning, to put in place measures that will maximise the potential of the banked cord blood. While all vials are needed for any current treatment, having them in separate vials allows for the flexibility to use only what is needed. This is because once thawed, cord blood cannot be refrozen.

The three-day roadshow was held to celebrate StemCord's 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Titled 'A Tribute to Women', it featured a 'sensory' rich exhibition on the growth stages of a foetus. Two public forums were also scheduled to cover pertinent topics related to women such as maternity yoga, women related cancer and cosmetic surgery.