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Breakthrough in Brain Surgery: Asleep DBS Can Relieve Fear and Anxiety Surrounding Surgery

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Nov. 5, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Brain surgery can be a disturbing prospect for anyone, but for patients already struggling with certain debilitating and progressive diseases like Parkinson's disease and dystonia, remaining awake throughout the procedure is an added source of fear and anxiety. A procedure called deep brain stimulation (DBS) may control life-disrupting symptoms of such movement disorders; however, during traditional "awake DBS," patients go off their medications and, although given a sedative, remain conscious during the lengthy electrode placement surgery in order to provide feedback that can help the surgeon determine the best location for the electrodes.

There is now an alternative to awake surgery. DBS patients may undergo the procedure with general anesthesia, thanks to a revolutionary new platform called the ClearPoint® Neuro Intervention System that allows neurosurgeons to conduct minimally invasive "asleep DBS" surgery inside an MRI scanner. The innovative ClearPoint System was developed by MRI Interventions, Inc., a medical device company based in Irvine, California.

"We are pleased to enable this alternative for patients," says Kimble Jenkins, CEO of MRI Interventions. "With the ClearPoint System, the neurosurgeon uses live MRI imaging to guide placement of the electrodes at the target location in the brain, and the patient gets to sleep through the procedure."

DBS therapy is an important option for patients with Parkinson's disease or dystonia whose symptoms are not adequately controlled by medication.

Mr. Jenkins explains that ClearPoint was designed to provide a new, minimally invasive approach to this and other neurological surgeries. "We wanted to facilitate solutions for patients for whom we believe current surgical techniques can be improved. We believe the ClearPoint System helps us realize this goal by providing surgeons a real-time, high-resolution view of the brain and interventional instruments throughout a procedure. Through this detailed intra-procedural visualization, the ClearPoint System allows surgeons to target areas the size of a single sesame seed nearly anywhere in the brain."

For more on this remarkable development for brain surgery, visit www.mriinterventions.com.

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