## **Supporting Information**

## Phenylsulfonic acid functionalized carbon quantum dots based biosensor for acetylcholinesterase activity monitoring and inhibitor screening

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**1. Figure S1.** (A) TEM image of CQDs. (B) TEM image of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe. Insets: high-resolution TEM images.

**2. Figure S2**. Comparison of XPS wide spectra between mere CQDs (A) and PSA-CQDs nanoprobe (B), and high-resolution S2p XPS spectrum for PSA-CQDs nanoprobe (C).

3. Figure S3. IR spectra of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe and CQDs.

**4. Figure S4.** Fluorescence spectra of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe with the change of excitation wavelengths in the range of 395 - 465 nm.

**5. Figure S5**. Time-resolved decay curves of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe in the presence of different amount of  $Cu^{2+}$ . The lifetimes are calculated to be 4.4 ns.

**6.** Figure S6. The influence of metal cations on the fluorescence of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe. The concentration for each metal ion is  $40.0 \mu$ M.

**7. Figure S7.** The influence of amino acids and amines on the fluorescence of PSA-CQDs/Cu(II) solution.

8. Figure S8. The influence of ATCh on the fluorescence of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe.

**9. Figure S9**. Fluorescence intensity of the sensing system containing PSA-CQDs nanoprobe,  $Cu^{2+}$  (12.0  $\mu$ M), ATCh (1480.0  $\mu$ M) and AChE (600.0 U/L) as a function of incubation time.

**10. Figure S10**. The reversibility of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe in response to  $Cu^{2+}$  and GSH. The concentration for each species is 20.0  $\mu$ M.

**11. Figure S11**.Selectivity of the assay toward AChE with comparison to ACP, ALP, BSA, and IgG in buffer solution.  $I_0$  and I represent the fluorescence intensity before and after the addition of analytes. Activity used for each enzyme is 600.0 U/L.



**Figure S1.** (A) TEM image of CQDs. (B) TEM image of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe. Insets: high-resolution TEM images.



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Figure S3. IR spectra of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe and CQDs.



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Figure S7. The influence of amino acids and amines on the fluorescence of PSA-CQDs/Cu(II) solution.



Figure S8. The influence of ATCh amount on the fluorescence of PSA-CQDs nanoprobe.



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