UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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University of Tasmania licenses blood sampling technology to local company

World-leading blood sampling technology developed by the University of Tasmania is one step closer to commercialisation.

The University and Housefield Pty Ltd today announced the signing of an intellectual property licensing agreement to develop the technology known as MilliSpot™.

MilliSpot™ is a polymer-based material that can stabilise and store small amounts of dried blood, from a finger-prick for example, in a way that allows laboratories to carry out many common analyses with greater accuracy and precision.

The technology was invented by a team led by Professor Emily Hilder in the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science (ACROSS) and has been developed by the University for more than 5 years.

Professor Hilder said the current practice of storing blood on paper was not reliable enough for more complex drug testing and analysis.

“We need something better than paper and that’s what MilliSpot™ is – a porous polymer-based material,” she said.

“It’s wonderful to see an idea develop thanks to the hard work of many people and reassuring that we’ve taken this important next step in getting a product on the market.”

Once commercially available the Millispot™ polymeric material will be well positioned to replace the paper-based blood-spot media – opening up a valuable market.

Dr Darren Cundy, the University's Director of Business Development and Technology Transfer, said "the licencing agreement is a major step in the commercialisation process.

"The technology has now reached the point where we need to focus on manufacturing the material at the right level of quality and at a competitive price and that is best managed by the private sector," Dr Cundy said.

"Finding the right partners to take on this development stage and managing those relationships is something that an intermediary is well placed to do, so we are pleased to be working with Housefield, which has already invested significant time and effort into this."

Dr Robin Fieldhouse, Managing Director of Housefield Pty Ltd said he was delighted the University recognised the role that his company can play in accelerating the next stage of the product's development.

"We see significant opportunities for MilliSpot™ to become the dried blood spot material of choice, delivering benefits for both patients and scientists in a range of market applications," Dr Fieldhouse said.

"We look forward to developing the key partnerships that will be critical to the commercialisation program."

Housefield Pty Ltd is a Tasmania-based company established to nurture innovation and commercialisation business opportunities across Australia. Established in 2007, Housefield has direct interests in a number of Tasmanian-originated ventures, and also in a consultancy business assisting clients across a range of sectors with the progression of ideas and intellectual property into market application. Robin Fieldhouse is also the former Manager of Innovation and Commercial Development for UniQuest at the University of Tasmania and was instrumental in recognising and nurturing the potential of the MilliSpot™ technology.

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