



Hospitals, medical technology manufacturer team up to fund biomedical research

 MEDIA RELEASE

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CLEMSON — Hospitals across South Carolina joined with a major medical technology manufacturer in a pilot program to help fund biomedical research at three state universities.

Six hospitals have joined Stryker Corporation, one of the world's largest providers of medical technology, to help fund the Bioengineering Alliance of South Carolina, a consortium representing scientists at Clemson University, the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina.

“This is an important step forward in funding research, especially in translational technology to develop and transfer medical advances from the laboratory to bedside,” said Martine LaBerge, chairman of Clemson's bioengineering department. “These partners are taking the lead in redefining the roles of those involved in the development and delivery of medical technology.”

Called the South Carolina Medical Translational Technology Program, or “SC MedTransTech,” funds from the pilot program will support research to develop “clinically relevant medical technology ... to increase the competitiveness of South Carolina for biomedical engineering economic development and to benefit the healthcare of South Carolina patients.”

Stryker will rebate a portion of its product sales to the member hospitals; the hospitals, in turn, will contribute the rebates to support the SC MedTransTech program.

Founding partners in the program are AnMed Health System, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, the Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center, MUSC Health, Oconee Medical Center, and Palmetto Health.

“We are excited about the South Carolina Medical Translational Technology program, and look forward to the potential impact it could have on medical technology innovation,” said Brent Ladd,

vice president and general manager of Stryker's Healthcare Systems and Finance business.

An advisory council comprised mainly of participating hospital representatives will evaluate research proposals from faculty and decide which will be funded. The first call for proposals is scheduled to be made in April 2011. Stryker will be given “first right to negotiate” for licenses on technology developed with SC MedTransTech funding.

“This is the ideal platform for developing technology that will be of immediate benefit to patients,” LaBerge said. “The agreement among these leading hospitals and Stryker demonstrates the significance they place on furthering knowledge in this field and in developing the medical industry of the future. Hopefully it is a harbinger of future relationships among the scientists who develop new technologies, the medical professionals who use them and, ultimately, the patients who benefit from them.”

The Clemson bioengineering program ranked 22nd among public national universities in the most recent U.S. News & World Report survey of departments in that field.

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