

Medical device maker supports university research project in South Carolina

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Six S.C. hospitals have joined [Stryker Corp.](#) 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](#).

Stryker, a Michigan-based manufacturer of orthopedic implants, surgical equipment and other medical products, agreed to offer discounts to the six hospitals. The hospitals, in turn, will pass on the savings to the South Carolina Medical Translational Technology Program, or SC MedTransTech.

The partnership was announced Thursday.

"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."

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."

Founding partners in the SC MedTransTech 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."