

MidTECH Matters

News from NHS Innovations West Midlands

They say the best inventions are often the simplest - and that's certainly true when it comes to an innovation from a team of Occupational Therapists at University Hospital Birmingham (UHB) NHS Foundation Trust.

Licence Deal for Invention from University Hospital Birmingham



MidTECH chief executive David Gleaves helps Catherine Sykes to demonstrate the 'dressing loop'

The 'dressing loop' - a metre-long stretch of elastic - is speeding up the rate at which Occupational Therapists (OTs) at the Queen Elizabeth and Selly Oak Hospitals can evaluate patients' functional abilities as part of an assessment screen before they are discharged home.

The idea is also proving a boost for patients' privacy and dignity because they no longer have to undress, dress and wash themselves to demonstrate how well they could cope after leaving hospital.

Now a commercial licence deal for the invention - by a team led by Catherine Sykes, deputy head of the Trust's OT service - has been concluded thanks to MidTECH.

MidTECH has brokered the agreement for the production and distribution of the 'dressing loop' by Nottingham Rehab Supplies and the product will soon be on sale to other NHS and social care organisations.

The raw idea for the 'dressing loop' initially came from Sarah Winters, who remembered a game from her school-days in which, as part of a race, children would have to pick up a loop of elastic and pull it over their bodies from toe to head.

Catherine said: "We realised that if somebody could reach down to pull the loop over their feet, up their body and over their head they would have the range of movement needed to get washed, undressed and dressed. We teamed this up with a jar, which can show a patient's hand function in relation to how well they can open things.

"Of the 200 referrals a month that our OTs receive from wards needing patients

assessed before discharge, around 40 are for people who can benefit from using the 'dressing loop'. The loop is much better for these patients' privacy and dignity - and it cuts the amount of time for an assessment by 30 minutes to an hour, meaning they can go home more quickly and free up beds for others who need them."

The invention was one of the winners in the 'low tech' category of MidTECH's innovation awards in 2006 and the £2,000 prize was reinvested to steer forward its development as a commercial product.

David Gleaves, chief executive of MidTECH, said: "The beauty of this innovation is that it is simple in concept - yet very effective. We're extremely pleased that MidTECH has been instrumental in negotiating a commercial licence deal so that this ingenious device will be available to help patients and OTs in other hospitals. The UHB Trust will also benefit financially and will be able to invest the share of the profits that it receives to develop and enhance its services."

Nottingham Rehab Supplies plans to market the 'dressing loop' complete with a compact disk in the lid of the jar giving instructions and assessment forms for use by OTs.

Catherine said: "I never thought I'd be classed as an inventor, although we are always striving to improve our services to patients using creative ideas for new ways of working. I'm thrilled that this invention is now about to become a commercial product that could help OTs and patients around this country, or even the world."



David Gleaves

a message from our Chief Executive

This issue of MidTECH Matters brings news of regional and national developments across the whole innovation pathway, from the conception of new and innovative ideas to the challenges of technology adoption.

You will read about the launch of the new NHS National Technology Adoption Hub. This is a new initiative to address the issues and barriers associated with getting new and innovative products adopted by the NHS.

At the other end of the innovation process, new ideas from across the region were highlighted in our annual West Midlands NHS Innovation Awards ceremony, which was held at the end of June. This year we were delighted to receive 80 entries from more than 30 of the region's NHS Trusts and PCTs, evidence that there are many innovative individuals and teams throughout the West Midlands. We hope to see some of the entries developed into new products in the future and are working towards achieving this. Our congratulations go to this year's prize winners and thanks to all of the NHS employees who entered.

Cancer Nurse Christine signs book deal

An award-winning Warwickshire Primary Care Trust Macmillan nurse is to become a nationally-published author after writing a booklet that is already helping local care homes as they look after people in the last days of their life.

With MidTECH's help, Christine Reddall, Macmillan nurse for care homes based at Myton Hospice in Warwick, has signed a contract with a publishing company.

The booklet **'Palliative Care Information for Care Homes'** provides practical information and tips to help care home staff make people with life-limiting conditions as comfortable as possible at the end of their lives.

As a result, in care homes using the booklet, residents are receiving a better standard of palliative care and there have been fewer unnecessary admissions to hospital in the final days of life.

MidTECH has helped to negotiate a contract with Radcliffe Publishing, which plans to print the book and market it to care homes across the country and even abroad.

Christine, a nurse with 33 years' experience, who began specialising in palliative care at Myton Hospice in 1991, last year won a prize in MidTECH's West Midlands NHS Innovation Awards 'low tech' category.

Her booklet - currently produced by Warwickshire PCT - is already in use in most of Warwickshire's 180 care homes.

In April 2007, Christine responded to an invitation from Radcliffe Publishing Ltd asking for interested health professionals to

enter proposals for a writing award. Christine sent in her proposal based on the booklet she had written, and Radcliffe expressed interest in publishing it.

Now MidTECH has helped her to negotiate a contract with Radcliffe Publishing, of Abingdon, Oxfordshire, which plans to print it and market it to care homes across the country and even abroad. Material from the original booklet will be used - but expanded on considerably to incorporate as much information as possible to make a user friendly book on palliative care for care home staff.

The book will be published nationally in summer next year.

Christine said: *"During my work in nursing homes I found that many care staff were unsure what to do when residents reached the final stage of their life and residents would often end up in hospital, rather than remaining in the home where they were most comfortable."*

"The booklet I have produced is aimed at giving care staff the information they need so they can have more confidence to look after people in the final days of their life, as well as how to access the support services available to them."

"Not only is this helping staff but it also brings real benefits to patients and their families at what can be an extremely distressing time."

Vanessa Fisher, manager of the Eversleigh Nursing Home in Leamington Spa, said: *"The palliative care booklet is excellent - a really good resource written in easy language that anyone can understand."*

"Our home has embraced the 'End of Life



Christine Reddall

Care Gold Standards Framework', which is aimed at improving palliative care of residents nearing the end of their life.

"Christine's booklet is certainly a great help to our staff in achieving that for our residents and their families - it's full of tips and a wealth of knowledge passed on by someone with years of experience."

Jill Freer, Managing Director of Community Services for Warwickshire Primary Care Trust said, *"Christine's commitment to patients with life-limiting conditions is demonstrated in this book. She is an asset to the primary care trust and we are delighted that her book will benefit patients and staff in care homes across the country, as well as providing some benefit to the PCT."*

David Gleaves, chief executive of MidTECH, said: *"We're delighted to have been able to help Christine to achieve a contract for national publication of a booklet that will help the drive to improve palliative care."*

Gillian Nineham, editorial director for Radcliffe Publishing, said: *"There is a shortage of such resources for health professionals working in nursing homes and we look forward to publishing Christine's book during next year."*



Andrew Carver

Business Development Director joins MidTECH

MidTECH has recently welcomed a new Business Development Director, Andrew Carver, to its team.

Andrew has 19 years' experience working with companies in the biotechnology, medical devices and life science/environment sector and has held Executive positions at board level.

He has considerable industrial experience in developing and licensing intellectual property as well as promoting, marketing and commercialising products.

Andrew said: *"A key element for success in the medical device industry is focussing on the customer to develop the right product. As the interface between the region's NHS and industry, MidTECH is in the unique position of being able to bring ideas and inventions generated by frontline NHS staff to patients, the healthcare industry and the NHS. I am therefore delighted to join the MidTECH team and look forward to growing our project portfolio and building on the successes of the last few years."*

David Gleaves, MidTECH chief executive said: *"Andrew's commercial licensing and IP experience and expertise will significantly strengthen MidTECH's capabilities and ensure we are well-placed to translate NHS ideas into viable commercial products."*



MidTECH chief executive David Gleaves had the opportunity to discuss the innovation agenda with health secretary Alan Johnson at a recent event in Birmingham."

special feature

2007 Innovation Awards

Triumph of the 'Oscars' for NHS Innovations



All of our 2007 finalists

MidTECH gave the stars of West Midlands NHS invention and innovation their own 'Oscars' style ceremony - in honour of trail-blazing techniques and projects that are now being used to help patients around the region.

More than 80 entries were received for the 'Celebration of Healthcare Innovation' from over 30 NHS organisations in the West Midlands.



Winners - (l-r) Sanjeev Badwal, Dr Rob Higgins & Steven Simpson



Runners up - (l-r) Dr Stefan Bajada, Liz Oliver and Dr Ian Baguley

The **'High Tech'** category winner was Dr Rob Higgins, consultant nephrologist for University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, who has pioneered kidney transplants for patients who would otherwise be unable to have one because their antibodies would reject a donor's organ.

He and his team use new techniques that could lead to a 20% increase in 'living donor' kidney transplants in the UK.

Winner of the **'Innovative Practice'** category was Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust for its new 'shaded observation charts', which help nurses and doctors to keep better track of any deterioration in a patient's condition.

Charge nurse Steven Simpson, who initially came up with the idea of a 'red, amber and green' chart coding to give a clear indication to nurses and other staff of the action they need to take when someone's condition deteriorates, collected the award on behalf of the Trust's critical care outreach team.

South Birmingham PCT clinched the **'Community Engagement'** award for a project devised by occupational therapist Sanjeev Badwal to help people with moderate to severe learning disabilities.

'Steps to Engagement' - a new package of training for carers to identify ways they can help people with learning disabilities to be more active and fulfilled - is now being further developed by Sanjeev and her team throughout Birmingham.

The runners up, who each received £1,000 to develop their projects, were:

'High Tech' - Dr Stefan Bajada, from Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic and District Hospital NHS Trust, for his team's clinical trials using stem cells to repair problematic fractures that would not heal otherwise.

'Innovative Practice' - Dr Ian Baguley, consultant anaesthetist at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, for an assessment tool to help theatres and anaesthetic departments to increase day case surgery rates and avoid cancellations.

Community Engagement - Dr Nigel Capps, consultant chemical pathologist and the RADISH (Reduction of Atherosclerotic Disease in Shropshire) team from Shropshire County PCT, for 'To My Healthy Heart', a package to help patients who have, or are at risk of, heart or other vascular disease.

'Ones to Watch' awards - of £500 each - were presented to Mohammed Khalid, specialist registrar for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, and Monica Spiteri, professor of respiratory medicine for University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust.

Mr Khalid's project is a device to help ease swelling after injury and Monica Spiteri is developing a device to help people with chronic lung conditions.

"We never cease to be impressed by the enthusiasm, creativity and commitment demonstrated by NHS employees," said David Gleaves, chief executive of MidTECH.

"The judges were extremely impressed by the quality and diversity of the entries we

received for our awards, which made deciding on the prize-winners a difficult task.

"We look forward now to seeing these - and other - innovations from NHS staff flourish and develop, and we at MidTECH will offer all the help we can to help them achieve their full potential."



Dr Peter Mayer & MidTECH chairman Alan Wenban-Smith

Special recognition was given at the ceremony to Dr Peter Mayer, who retired earlier this year. Dr Mayer, a consultant geriatrician, was a member of the MidTECH board until his retirement and was instrumental in raising the profile and importance of innovation within the region's NHS. MidTECH chairman Alan Wenban-Smith paid tribute to Dr Mayer and presented him with a gift of engraved crystal tumblers. MidTECH staff and board members wish him a long and happy retirement.

If you have any innovations that you think could be commercialised, contact us at MidTECH on 0121 455 0346

NHS National Technology Adoption Hub Launched

The new NHS National Technology Adoption Hub was launched at the end of September. Based in Manchester and led by Chief Executive Margaret Parton, the hub's mission is to work directly with the NHS across the country at a clinical, managerial and procurement level to identify and overcome the barriers to adoption for innovative technologies that have already demonstrated clear benefits to patients and will improve system efficiency.

The hub has been established to address major issues which emerged from the Healthcare Industries Task Force (HITF), launched in October 2003. These included how to stimulate innovation in the NHS and industry and increase adoption of new useful medical technologies. The Task Force published its report 'Better health through partnership: a programme for action' in November 2004.

The need to speed up technology adoption in the NHS was also highlighted in Lord Ara Darzi's recent interim report 'our NHS, our future'.

Established to stimulate innovation in the NHS and industry and increase adoption of new useful medical technologies.

In the course of its first three years the Technology Adoption Hub will review a wide range of innovative medical technologies against strict criteria and select up to fifteen to implement in a wide range of real-time clinical settings. By engaging potential adopters at an early stage of the projects the hub team will develop a full justification for uptake of the technology as well as a clear 'road map' of how to manage the adoption process. This will remove some of the risks in the adoption process by alleviating issues surrounding the potential 'disruptive' nature of innovative technologies.

The selection criteria state that the technology should:

- Involve innovation which can effect a step change in health care provision
- Have a clear adoption issue i.e. strong evidence base for benefits of implementation.



National Technology Adoption Hub

A National Resource Based in the North West



The Technology Adoption Hub team. (l-r)
- Margaret Parton, Chief Executive
- Gareth Redmayne, External Relations Manager
- Emma Sarno, Project Coordinator

- Ideally already have been subject to some form of appraisal (CEP, NICE, HTA) and have had some minimal uptake already but suboptimal
- Support national policy priorities
- Be in a clinical area of major focus for the NHS

Having used the above criteria to select the potential projects these will be subject to a rigorous due diligence process at corporate, clinical and procurement level. This process may reveal a range of issues outside the remit of the hub that are hampering the adoption of that technology and feedback on resolving those will be provided to the companies involved. These would be discussed with the company and routes identified to overcome these issues before inclusion into a hub project.

The due diligence process will also serve to inform the hub team on the particular issues at people, process and infrastructure level that will need to be resolved during the adoption project. Each project will be carried out in three Trusts which are currently non adopters.

The first six projects have been selected and the Technology Adoption Hub will put out a series of calls to the healthcare sector for future potential projects. The first of these calls will be announced in early 2008.

For more information visit www.technologyadoptionhub.nhs.uk or call 0161 276 5263

To read Lord Darzi's interim report visit www.nhs.uk/ournhs

Frequently Asked Questions

In each issue of MidTECH Matters we answer questions on a specific area of intellectual property. This time we focus on **ownership of ideas**.

If I invent something, the idea belongs to me doesn't it?

Not necessarily. The law states that if your idea is made during the course of your normal duties then it is not yours, it is owned by your employer. Any idea not related to your job is, however, owned by you.

Many Trusts have introduced intellectual property policies which cover ownership of intellectual property.

What if I had the idea at home and worked on it in my own time?

Legally speaking, it makes no difference. If the idea relates to your normal duties, it is still owned by your employer.

So if I don't own the idea, what's in it for me?

In accordance with Department of Health guidelines, many Trusts' intellectual property policies allow for an employee who invents a new product to receive a share of any money the Trust makes from its commercialisation.

Exploiting new ideas, even the simplest of devices, is an expensive and risky business with no guarantee of success. If the idea is owned by the Trust, MidTECH can provide expertise and resources to progress the project at no personal cost or risk to you. We cannot do this for ideas owned by individuals, even if they are NHS employees.

You will also have the satisfaction of seeing your idea realised, for the benefit of you, your Trust, the NHS and its patients.

If you are an NHS employee and have any queries relating to ownership of intellectual property, give us a call and we can advise you.

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