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RESEARCH FEATURE

Mobi-Drip enables hospital care at home

by Amy Sanders

A new design in mobile infusion devices could allow millions of patients requiring a drip to recover in the comfort of their own homes, freeing up hospital beds and saving hundreds of dollars a week.

Since jotting down the concept of the Mobi-Drip on a napkin over 10 years ago, Professor Paul Dastoor's idea has materialised into a product that is already in use, and can potentially be used by over 120 000 hospitals worldwide.

The Mobi-Drip delivers a predetermined infusion flow rate by applying controlled pressure to a standard bag of IV fluid, which is wrapped in a cuff that inflates via a disposable compressed gas canister. It is safe, lightweight, non-mechanical and non-electrical, and can be taken just about anywhere.

"The innovation of the Mobi-Drip's design means that it has the potential to be more accurate than a computer-based pump," said Professor Dastoor.

"The simplicity and disposability of several of its components also means that the Mobi-Drip is cheaper and quicker to administer, and requires no medical training."

The superior value proposition offered by Mobi-Drip's lower cost, its ease of use and higher accuracy has been the driving force behind it rapidly gaining market acceptance.

The success of the product so far has been a result of the collaborative effort between Keystone Medical Pty. Ltd. and Newcastle Innovation.

"Dr Brent Jenkins [CEO of Newcastle Innovation] has provided strong support for this product since the very beginning" said Professor Dastoor.

"Newcastle Innovation has not only assisted in the development, testing and commercialisation of the product, they have also been an active investor and shareholder in the development company, Keystone Medical Pty Ltd."

This active support has accelerated development activities and has allowed the product to be positioned to secure recently over \$1 000 000 in equity funding including an \$800 000 investment from Crea Pty Ltd, to develop the final market-ready product.

"Successful commercialisation is a long, difficult and expensive activity. Mobi-Drip has been successful due to the creative energy and passion provided by Professor Dastoor plus the strong partnership developed between the participants" said Dr Jenkins.

"It has been a pleasure to be associated with this excellent product and the great team behind it."

Clinical trials are currently underway, and thanks to the million dollars Mobi-Drip raised in 2009, a large scale testing facility is also being prepared. Researchers are seeking further investment from an industry partner to support the next stage in the development plan.

"It's a highly applicable product. We envision this product being used not only in hospitals and in homes, but in ambulances, the military and even veterinary clinics," said Professor Dastoor.

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