

Media Release (For immediate release 29 April 2008)

Thumbs Up For New Aussie “Cancer” Miniature Microscope

A new miniature microscope that travels inside the human body and finds cancer earlier, is establishing an Australian company as the world leader in a new discipline which it has virtually created on its own.

The new diagnostic discipline called Endomicroscopy is made possible by the miniature microscope invented by Melbourne based biotechnology company, OptiScan.

The OptiScan endomicroscope got the thumbs up at a meeting of the world’s leading gastroenterologists at International Endomicroscopy 2008.

This, the world’s first Endomicroscopy conference held at San Raffaele Hospital, Milan, Italy, this month, saw more than 150 gastroenterologists and pathologists share experience and watch a series of real life patient procedures in three operating theatres demonstrating the use of this breakthrough medical technology.

Doctors from the US, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Japan, Singapore, Israel and China who presented their work with endomicroscopy at the conference were overwhelming in their enthusiasm for the product.

At the Johns Hopkins Hospital in the US, the Director of Gastroenterology, Dr Marcia Canto, has established one of four training centres around the world to teach doctors how to use endomicroscopes.

Dr Canto told the conference, “In our trial treatment of Barrett’s Oesophagus (a pre-cancerous condition), we have found the endomicroscope to be highly accurate in detecting the disease, and the other studies show extraordinary consistency with our own.”

Dr Canto says, “Diagnostically this is almost as good as it gets and this is just the beginning of Endomicroscopy.”

The OptiScan invention is also being hailed as “the” technology for diagnosing gastrointestinal disease in children where its ability to provide “in vivo” diagnosis can save children two visits to the surgeon – one for a biopsy and then again later for treatment if required.

Dr. Mike Thomson, Paediatric Gastroenterologist at Sheffield’s Children’s Hospital, UK told delegates, “We have now performed many endomicroscope procedures and we have solved cases where diagnosis has beaten us. For example one youngster had a persistent case of stomach pain and diarrhoea. The endomicroscope identified a lesion which we were able to map and ablate (remove) in a single procedure without the need for a biopsy”.

“The youngster was successfully cured. As a result of this and many other procedures we now believe that endomicroscopy is safe for patients as young as eight months of age.”

“And, endomicroscopy makes economic sense - it is a significantly less expensive procedure. In the UK we pay about \$A170 for a biopsy and our hospital spends upwards of \$A1 mill a year for gastrointestinal biopsies. The reduction in biopsy costs alone justifies our investment in the equipment at our institution.”

“So patients, hospital budgets and reduced procedure times for Doctors all add up to making the endomicroscope an all round new technology winner.”

Vicki Tutungi, the new CEO at OptiScan says, “We are more than elated at this enthusiasm for our invention”.

“It established us the clear market leader in this technology. After years of work gaining acceptance for this technology we believe we have reached a turning point for OptiScan”

Already endomicroscopes are being used in more than thirty overseas hospitals for finding diseases such as Ulcerative Colitis, Barrett’s Oesophagus, Gastritis and Gastric Cancer, Coeliac’s Disease, Colon Cancer, Colorectal Adenoma, Crohn’s Disease, and other Oesophageal Diseases.

Since its invention in 1988, Optiscan endomicroscopes are now set to become the industry standard medical device in the company of MRI, CAT scans and ultrasound.

Optiscan’s miniature microscopes (marketed internationally by Pentax after they are incorporated into Pentax endoscopes) allow doctors to see histology (cell structure) during endoscopy for the first time and offer magnifications of 1000 times (compared to 30-40 times for other endoscopes).

The Pentax deal with Optiscan for flexible endomicroscopy has already seen installation of its ISC – 1000 units in leading gastrointestinal medical centres around the world.

Endomicroscopes combine laser, fiber optic and computer technologies to produce miniature confocal microscopes. Magnification of up to 1,000x allows cellular and sub-cellular structures to be observed.

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Vicki Tutungi the new CEO of OptiScan whose task is to build shareholder value following successful clinical trials and growing global sales.



The OptiScan miniature confocal microscope is the heart of the acclaimed Pentax ISC 1000 flexible endomicroscope which for the first time allows doctors to see (cancer) cell structures. Here it is shown in the operator's hand.



The first Optiscan miniature confocal microscope dwarfs the new generation version, now installed in endoscopes to create the world leading endomicroscope and a new medical discipline – endomicroscopy.

Photos can be viewed and downloaded at:

<http://www.apr.au.com/press/>