

<b>Business Support</b>
<b>Locate in the Northwest</b>
<b>Northwest Biotech</b>
<b>Biomap</b>
<b>Events</b>
<b>News</b>
<b>Jobs</b>
<b>ABOUT US</b>
<b>NEWSLETTER</b>
To sign up for the Bionow email newsletter, please click below:
<b>EMAIL SIGN-UP</b>

[Homepage](#) » [News](#) » [Monthly Newsletter No 67 April 07](#)

**Monthly Newsletter No 67 April 07**

**Companies**

**AstraZeneca to acquire MedImmune**

AstraZeneca announced on 23<sup>rd</sup> April that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire MedImmune, Inc for a total consideration of \$15.6 billion. The acquisition of MedImmune significantly accelerates AstraZeneca's biologics strategy. The combination of MedImmune with AstraZeneca's wholly-owned subsidiary Cambridge Antibody Technology will create a worldclass, fully integrated biologics and vaccines business within the AstraZeneca Group with critical mass in research, development, regulatory, manufacturing and global sales and marketing reach. The deal is expected to be finalised in June 2007. The northwest region is home to both AstraZeneca's largest world R&D centre and one of its major manufacturing centres in Cheshire and to MedImmune's flu production plant in Speke.

**Renovo announces positive Phase II efficacy trial results for Prevascar**

Renovo Group plc, the Manchester based biopharmaceutical company developing drugs for the prevention and reduction of scarring at multiple body sites, today announces positive Phase II safety and efficacy clinical trial results for Prevascar™. This was the first study in man to investigate Prevascar's efficacy in the prevention and reduction of scarring in the skin. Prevascar is a therapeutic drug formulation of human recombinant Interleukin 10 (IL-10) and is an important modulator of the inflammatory response resulting in an improvement in the subsequent scar appearance after wounding and surgery.

**AstraZeneca celebrates 50 years of Research at Alderley Park and co-hosts the launch of the NW Science Strategy**

The Secretary of State, Alistair Darling, spoke at AZ's celebration of 50 years of research, particularly in cancer therapeutics, alongside Sir James Black, Nobel Prize Winner for his work on beta blockers at Alderley Park on 17 April. (AZ 50 yr link) Mr Darling also spoke later that day at the official launch of the NW Science Strategy supported by the NWDA. The Biomedical sector is one of four priority areas for the NW Science Council which aims to ensure that key science & technology industries remain internationally competitive industry and alert to emerging opportunities (science strategy link).

**Maelor plc acquires Acorus Therapeutics Ltd**

The board of Maelor plc, the Chester based specialist critical care company, is pleased to announce the acquisition of specialist pharmaceuticals and devices company Acorus Therapeutics Ltd, for a total consideration of £13 million. Completion of the acquisition is expected to take place on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Commenting on the acquisition Tim Wright CEO said 'The acquisition of Acorus is a transforming transaction for Maelor, creating strong, profitable business with positive cash flow. The integration risks, costs and distractions are minimal due to the virtual nature of Acorus and the combined product portfolios offer a high degree of synergy in terms of customer base and distribution channels. We now have a product portfolio and pipeline capable of delivering strong future growth'.

**Medical Device Innovations (MDI) wins prize for life-saving innovation in Merseyside**

Medical Device Innovations, based in Daresbury, is the March winner of the 2007 Merseyside Innovations Awards. The company is developing a device for life-saving treatment for pneumothorax in emergency situations which can lead to death within minutes. While there are already devices in use, these need assembling before use and can prove difficult in emergency situations. MDI's Thoraquik is a fit-for-purpose device that does not require any pre-assembly.

**EpiStem IPO on AIM**

EpiStem Holdings Plc were admitted to AIM on 4<sup>th</sup> April. The £3 million funds raised will be used to enable the partnering of novel therapeutic compounds, widen the diagnostic platform of the existing cash-flow positive fee for service business and general corporate services. David Evans, Chairman of EpiStem said 'We are delighted at the positive response that we have had from both our existing investors and new institutions in supporting the development plans of the company'.

**National Biomanufacturing Centre (NBC) forges ahead**

Following the successful MHRA inspection of the NBC for manufacturing license earlier this year, Eden Biodesign, the NBC operators are now well underway with GMP products for Onyvax and SR Pharma. For further information on the NBC and the Access Fund which is available to the UK and Merseyside companies to support the cost of services, please see [www.biomanufacturing.co.uk](http://www.biomanufacturing.co.uk)

**DxS launch TheraScreen™**

Manchester based DxS announced on 16th April the launch of the first CE marked diagnostic kit to detect mutation in the EGFR gene. The TheraScreen: EGFR29 kit is used as an aid to doctors in selecting lung cancer patients suitable for treatment with tyrosine kinase inhibitor therapies. Recent studies into non-small cell lung cancer have shown that some patients carry mutations in the epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) gene. The kit is highly selective and sensitive, detecting 29 of the most common somatic mutations in the EGFR gene. The TheraScreen kit detects mutations that are frequently missed by other methods, the most common of which is DNA sequencing.

**Research**

**A new study of living cells could revolutionise the way we test drugs**

Professor Andre Geim and his team from The University of Manchester have made a breakthrough by detecting the electrical equivalent of a living cell's last gasp. The work, funded by EPSRC, takes them a step closer to both seeing the 'heartbeat' of a living cell and a new way to test drugs by measuring the flow of ions (current) across cell membranes. The recognition of such electrical activity would provide a kind of 'cellular cardiogram', allowing the daily functioning of the cell to be monitored in a similar way to a cardiograph showing the workings of a human heart.

**Events**

**BIO Korea 2007**

BIO Korea 2007 will be held at COEX, Seoul in Korea from September 12 to 14 2007. Korean government is currently implementing new policies for the promotion of biotechnology as one of the next-generation growth engines following IT. BIO Korea 2007, with the major goal of application on biotechnology in business, will provide an opportunity to find business and technology partners. To find out more information visit [www.biokorea.org](http://www.biokorea.org)

**StemCells: hope or hype?**

Stem cell research is a controversial topic raising challenging issues. What are stem cells and how might the applications of this research impact on our lives? Nowgen are organising a free event on Thursday 17 May (6.30pm - 9.30pm) at The Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester. If you wish to attend and hear from experts in the field, join in the debate and cast your vote call Caroline Dickinson on 0161 833 0027 or Jane Elley on 0161 606 0156 or alternatively email [c.dickinson@mosi.org.uk](mailto:c.dickinson@mosi.org.uk) or [j.elley@mosi.org.uk](mailto:j.elley@mosi.org.uk)

**NEWS**

**» Bionow Newsletter May**

**» AstraZeneca celebrates 50 years of Research at Alderley Park and co-hosts the launch of the NW Science Strategy**

**» AstraZeneca to acquire MedImmune**

**EVENTS**

**Stem Cell Manchester - The North West Initiative**