

Newsletter

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In this Issue:

- Novel Treatment for Autoimmune Diseases
- When Should I be filing my Patent Application
- Information on Due Diligence
- 2008 IP Conference - Confirmed Date

Update on A Novel Treatment For Chronic Inflammatory And Autoimmune Diseases

Chronic inflammatory and autoimmune diseases develop when defects in the immune system lead the body to attack its own cells, tissues, and organs destroying healthy body tissue. Normally the immune system's army of white blood cells helps protect the body from harmful substances, called antigens. The immune system produces antibodies that destroy these harmful substances. But in patients with an autoimmune disorder, the immune system can't tell the difference between healthy body tissue and antigens – the result being an immune response that destroys normal body tissues.

The range of diseases involving the immune and inflammatory cells is immense and includes rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, type-1 diabetes mellitus, lupus nephritis, inflammatory bowel disease and psoriasis as well as other inflammatory conditions such as allograft transplantation rejection, graft versus host diseases, recurrent spontaneous abortion, and failure of IVF implantation.

Currently there is no universally effective treatment

for these conditions and most treatments only target symptoms rather than the disease. Currents treatments are non-specific and cause severe acute and long-term side-effects. There is a pressing need for safer and more effective therapies.

Key researchers from the Kolling Institute's Perinatal Research Group at Royal North Shore Hospital and the University of Sydney, Dr Tommie Tue Nguyen, Professor Eileen Gallery, Dr Sharon McCracken and Professor Jonathan Morris have been working on this problem. While studying the immune responses in pregnancy and molecules that mimic these responses they have identified an antibody that has been shown to have *in vivo* benefit for the treatment of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis.

The Office of Commercialisation, on behalf of NSCCH and the University of Sydney, is working to license the technology to a commercial company able to humanize the antibody and take it through to human clinical trials in one or more disease indications. Several international companies have immediately shown interest and discussions have commenced under confidentiality agreements.

The invention is protected by an International (PCT) Patent application, which is owned by NSCCH and the University of Sydney. By agreement with the University, NSCCH is the sole commercializing entity.

Further information is available from:

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DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE AN INVENTION? OR DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION - CONTACT THE OFFICE OF COMMERCIALISATION

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The Office of Commercialisation is responsible for all IP owned by NSCCH, and works with our partner universities, such as USYD and UTS, to protect and commercialise jointly owned IP. Please refer to our website www.officeofcommercialisation.com.

When should I be filing my patent application?

In a recent newsletter we highlighted the importance of early consultation to reduce the likelihood of IP leakage without first having secured potential patent protection. That begs the next question, "When should I be filing my patent application?" The immediate answer is of course that the patent application should be filed before any publication or use of the invention takes place. Generally, once a decision to pursue patent protection (or at least to keep that option open) has been made, a patent application should be filed as soon as the invention can be sufficiently described and the inventors can soundly predict its scope.

The initial patent application can be a provisional application or it can be a complete application. A provisional remains pending for only 12 months, within which time a complete application must be filed. The provisional provides a cost-effective way to establish a priority date for your invention, which is the date against which novelty and inventive step of the invention will be assessed. The 12 month "life" of the provisional can often be useful to decide whether to continue with the patenting process, to do further research and development on the invention, and for the Office of Commercialisation to explore commercialisation opportunities of the invention by seeking potential commercialisation partners.

The NSCCH Office of Commercialisation, with the assistance of their IP attorneys Spruson&Ferguson Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys, is able to guide you in exploring all of these patenting and commercialisation issues.



More Information for Researchers: Due Diligence

Acquisition of new technology, via licensing, joint ventures, mergers etc. involves the transfer of IP. Due diligence is an information gathering exercise which tests the viability, risks and future probability of the transaction in question.

A due diligence exercise relating to IP assets represents a different challenge to an analysis of

a company's physical assets. It should comprise a thorough audit of the seller's IP assets. All registered and unregistered IP rights should be identified and their current status, expiry dates and fee payment histories checked. A buyer of IP assets must satisfy itself that the seller has the legal right to transfer the property in question, for example, as owner or via sub-licensing rights.

The consequences of wrongly assuming that a seller has legal rights to transfer the property are potentially disastrous. Whilst due diligence is usually carried out by a member of the NSCCH Office of Commercialisation, a checklist that outlines the key considerations in carrying out due diligence which researchers should be aware of can be downloaded from http://www.officeofcommercialisation.com/dnl/NSCCH_Due_Diligence_.pdf

2008 IP CONFERENCE – Confirmed Date



The 2nd Annual IP Management and Commercialisation for Hospitals Conference will be held in the Loewenthal Auditorium at Westmead Hospital, Darcy Road, Westmead, Sydney on Thursday 11th September 2008. Further details will be available shortly.

AusMedtech 08 National Conference Program

Taking Australian Medical Technology To The World
12 – 13 May 2008, Four Points by Sheraton
Darling Harbour, Sydney

This conference focuses on driving the export driven success of Australian medical technology companies; commercialisation; innovation; and the development of a major, sustainable Australian industry delivering high quality, innovative solutions to medical technology needs around the world. It will bring together members of the national and international Medtech community. For details visit: <http://www.ausmedtech08.com.au/>

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