



New drug development facility helps move medicines to market (图)

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29 May 2007, Innovative new drugs for obesity, diabetes, pain, cancer and multiple sclerosis are being assisted to market at The University of Queensland by Australia's only "one-stop" integrated drug development organisation.

TetraQ, a preclinical contract research and development (R&D) facility providing services to the global pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries, was officially launched today by Minister for State Development, Employment and Industrial Relations, John Mickel.

The facility, which helps to move medicines out of the laboratory and into the market more quickly, provides expertise and support through preclinical trials of new drugs, which are required before human trials and subsequent release to the market.

Business Development Manager, Rose-marie Pennisi said TetraQ, which received \$8.1million from the Smart State Research Facility Fund in 2005, had now established its position in the market.

She said TetraQ had proven there was a demand for its services, with 150 R&D contracts now completed for 43 clients.

TetraQ has assisted Melbourne-based Metabolic Pharmaceuticals Limited with the preclinical development of a new pain killer made from venom of the Australian marine cone snail and Brisbane company Progen Industries Limited with a new cancer treatment that is now being tested in human trials in hospitals around the world.

"Australian biotech companies, universities, research institutes and the pharmaceutical industry now have access to a highly skilled commercial R&D service with a wealth of experience in the four core disciplines that are required in preclinical drug development," Ms Pennisi said.

The growth of TetraQ shows that the sector is keen to take advantage of the tailored solutions that we offer and keep their R&D dollars in Australia to contribute to the growth of the drug development industry on-shore.

"TetraQ now provides its services internationally and the global market will be a target for future growth. We are also collaborating with drug development companies in other countries to offer our clients access to services not available in Australia and vice versa."

TetraQ recently attained official Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) recognition from the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) for one of its key laboratories. This means the work performed there by TetraQ will be accepted for international regulatory review, which provides a high degree of assurance to TetraQ customers.

"This is an additional incentive for biotechnology companies not to go offshore to develop new drugs," Ms Pennisi said.

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