

PRESS RELEASE – CSL License Agreement

Trans-Tasman biotech deal could lead to safer blood transfusions

A trans-tasman agreement to commercialise a world-first blood product with the potential to substantially increase the accuracy of blood group testing will be signed at Auckland University of Technology this week.

AUT research partner, Kiwi Ingenuity Ltd will sign a licensing agreement with Australian company CSL Ltd on Thursday 25th March in AUT's Council room.

The license will allow CSL Ltd to use the product developed by Kiwi Ingenuity and known as KODE™ CAE in Australasian markets.

Witnessing the agreement will be the Honourable Pete Hodgson, Minister for Science, Research and Technology.

Chairman Eric Henry will sign the agreement on behalf of Kiwi Ingenuity Ltd with Tim Carroll representing CSL Ltd.

The development of the KODE™ CAE – the world's first synthetic ABO blood group coated cells, represents Kiwi Ingenuity Ltd's first commercial product. The product will be used by medical professionals testing donor blood and patients for the correct blood group before transfusion.

The ABO group system classifies blood into four types: A, B, AB and O. Currently there is no control system for blood group typing.

“It is very important that people are given the correct blood group – if they aren't, they could get very ill and potentially die. The development of KODE™ CAE will give testers the chance to use positive and negative controls during blood group typing. This will make the process of typing blood much safer,” says Eric Henry.

The realisation of Kiwi Ingenuity's first commercial product represents thousands of hours of research over a 7 year period and a unique collaboration between a private company and AUT, says Eric Henry.

Kiwi Ingenuity chose AUT as its partner institution. Eric Henry says the relationship is mutually beneficial as AUT offers Kiwi Ingenuity infrastructural support while the University has the opportunity to give its PhD students a chance to apply their academic skills in a commercial environment.

Dean of AUT's Science and Engineering Faculty, Professor Roy Geddes, says Kiwi Ingenuity and the University's Biotechnology Research Centre are inexorably intertwined.

“The synergies that come out of the relationship mean so much to both organisations. Top AUT PhD students get an opportunity to work alongside some of the country's most innovative biotechnology developers. We believe

the exposure to the rigours of a commercial scientific research environment give our graduates a real edge.”

CSL Ltd is a large Australian company specialising in the development, manufacturing and marketing of pharmaceutical products of biological origin. CSL has been involved in blood and blood products since the mid 1940's. Kiwi Ingenuity Ltd has had a long standing association with CSL Ltd.

Tim Carroll, the Immunohaematology Group Manager for CSL says “CSL is pleased to be commercialising such an innovative new product. It fits perfectly with CSL's important role in blood supply security, reliability and safety. Kiwi Ingenuity's KODE technology is suitable for use worldwide and has the potential to significantly improve the safety of pretransfusion blood testing.”

Eric Henry says the relationship that has been built up between the two companies is crucial in going forward with the development of the product.

The KODE™ CAE is soon to be trialled in selected Australasian research centres. All going well, it is expected CSL will launch KODE control products on the global market later this year, says Eric Henry.