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MedaPhor wins 2010 Innovation Network Impact Award

MedaPhor Ltd, a Cardiff University spin-out company, which produces innovative obstetrics and gynaecology ultrasound training products for postgraduate medical professionals, announced today that it had won the 2010 Innovations Network Impact Award.

Training methods for sonographers have always been expensive, time-consuming and dependent on the availability of patients and resources. With the constant demand for highly skilled sonographers, MedaPhor identified the potential for a training system which was fast, effective and which did not need to be based in a clinical environment. The resultant ScanTrainer system was launched at the BSGI earlier this month.

Fundamental to MedaPhor's success in developing the ScanTrainer, has been the multidisciplinary collaboration with two academic schools from Cardiff University. **Cardiff School of Medicine** team initiated the concept for the simulator and designed its educational content to meet national ultrasound training curriculum requirements. A team from **Cardiff School of Computer Science and Informatics** also worked closely with MedaPhor, learning human anatomy and ultrasound methodology along the way in order to develop a unique interactive system using the latest advances in simulation technology.

To ensure that ScanTrainer met the needs of medical practitioners, trainers and students, **Cardiff School of Medicine** academic staff and students undertook several evaluations at the development stage to establish its potential and fine tune the final product. The role of simulation and feedback was highlighted in a small study whereby in just nine weeks, an extremely short period of time for training in this area, a medical student with little background knowledge in obstetrics and gynaecology, successfully used a prototype system to learn the techniques required and then taught her peers to a satisfactory level of competency.

A second product, the Transabdominal Simulator, is already in the pipe-line with a launch expected later in the year. The intention is to follow this with systems aimed at more general medical markets. With virtual simulation an integral educational tool for Ultrasound Masters students at Cardiff School of Medicine, these new products will continue to benefit from MedaPhor's access to unlimited case studies and to vital user feedback.

The development of ScanTrainer was also supported by grants from the Welsh Assembly Government SMART programme at different stages of its development.

Commenting on the launch Stuart Gall, Chief Executive Officer of MedaPhor, said:

"We are delighted to be recognised by the Innovations Network, as their 2010 Impact Award winner. The collaborative work that has been done with the University, combined with the support of the Welsh Assembly Government and our major investors, Fusion IP and Finance Wales, has been vital in bringing the new ScanTrainer to market."

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Background to MedaPhor

Spun out of Cardiff University, MedaPhor was established in 2004 to develop innovative ultrasound training programmes for medical professionals.

MedaPhor has been funded to date by Cardiff University, Fusion IP, Finance Wales and a number of private investors, including Nazar Amso.

MedaPhor has also received SMARTCymru grant support from the Welsh Assembly Government which has been fundamental in helping the company develop the new ScanTrainer simulator.