



## Media Release

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### **World's first single-handed blade remover by Australian medical devices company on show at world's biggest design expo**

An innovative sterile scalpel blade remover, set to revolutionise a common operating room procedure, is one of four Australian designs among 106 finalists on display at the INDEX: AWARD exhibition in Copenhagen, Denmark until September 23 ([www.indexaward.dk](http://www.indexaward.dk)).

The sterile scalpel blade remover, designed to prevent sharps injuries - particularly in operating theatres - is one of only 18 designs in the INDEX:AWARD Work category. Designers, PROdesign Australia worked with retired Brisbane emergency physician, Dr Neville Henry AO, to create the QCLICKSMART Cassette 3-in-1.

"This is another example of a great Australian innovation, and is the result of years of research and development, supported by a \$318,000 Australian Government R&D Start grant in 2001," said Invest Australia CEO, Barry Jones.

It is the world's first single-handed sterile scalpel blade removal device, and allows medical and nursing staff to remove a used blade single-handedly. The old blade is popped out and captured safely inside the QCLICKSMART Cassette 3-in-1, thereby reducing the risk of sharps injuries and resultant blood-borne diseases.

Research conducted earlier this year at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane, Australia revealed that the device is up to five times safer than a traditional safety scalpel. Up to 1 million sharps injuries are reported in the USA alone every year and scalpel blades account for 11 per cent of all sharps injuries.

The product is currently being launched in Australia, the USA, Canada, Japan and Europe (including the UK, Germany, France, Holland Denmark Italy, Spain, Belgium and Norway).

#### **Australia's medical devices industry**

"The QCLICKSMART Cassette 3-in-1 is just one of a handful of Australian medical devices receiving world-wide-recognition and investment," said Invest Australia CEO, Barry Jones.

"Australia's medical devices industry is made up of small to medium-sized enterprises, which excel in niche markets."

Australia is one of the richest healthcare markets in the Asia-Pacific region and the 11<sup>th</sup> largest in the world, with per capita spending on a par with European markets such as Germany or the Netherlands.

In the 2004 KPMG *Competitive Alternatives* report, Australia ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> after Canada as the most cost effective location for a model medical device manufacturing facility.

Australia's medical devices industry contributed about A\$333.1 million to Australia's gross domestic product in 2003-04. Although the industry is a relatively small component of the Australian manufacturing



sector, it spends a considerable amount on research and development. The industry employs about 10,000 people in more than 1,000 companies.

Australia exports most of the medical devices it produces and imports most of the medical devices it consumes (mainly from the US, Japan, Europe and China). Australia's revenue from medical devices was A\$898 million, about 87 per cent of which was from exports.

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Invest Australia is the Australian Government's inward investment agency that helps international companies build their business in Australia and offers investors a free, comprehensive and confidential service. Between July 2002 and June 2007, Invest Australia played a verified role in attracting or facilitating 387 projects worth approximately A\$55.8 billion, with the potential to create more than 27,900 jobs and generate A\$12.6 billion in export earnings.