Seahorse Press Release 06/06/2011

Seahorse Directors Win Medical Futures Award 2011

Managing Director, Dr. Art Tucker & Director Professor Atholl Johnston were awarded the prestigious Medical Futures Award for Respiratory Medicine this evening for their continuing work in medical innovation and research.

The team from Queen Mary, University of London and Barts and The London NHS Trust were named overall winner in the Respiratory Innovation category at the Medical Futures Innovation Awards, Europe's leading showcase of early-stage innovation in healthcare. The team had previously received 'Best Blue Sky Idea in Respiratory Innovations,' for their pneumonia preventing invention.

The award was presented by TV executive, Michael Mosley at a high profile ceremony in central London in front of 700 leaders in medicine, politics and business. The event was hosted by comedian Rory Bremner and Dynasty actress Emma Samms, founder of the children's charity Starlight.

Inventor Dr Art Tucker, also from Queen Mary and St. Bart's hospital said; "*The nitric oxide team – collaboration between Queen Mary, University of London and Barts and The London NHS Trust - is delighted to have won a 2011 Medical Futures Innovations Award. It recognises the strength of medical innovation within our Institutions and the commitment of the team. The invention and development of the nitric oxide systems has been the product of 10 years of intensive research. Further, this technology has broad potential in a range of medical and non-medical applications such as wound care and infection control. We are pleased to have the support of Exidomed Ltd, as our licensing partner to support the commercial development of these exciting innovations. We hope that the recognition of this award will assist and encourage external investment and collaboration.*"

Overall winner of The Respiratory Innovation Awards 2011 - YouTube

NOX: Prevention of Ventilator Associated Pneumonia

This is a new therapy to prevent pneumonia associated with patients being treated on a ventilator. This innovation is a therapy consisting of a liquid of nitric oxide, a chemical that plays a key role in defence, but whose levels are significantly reduced during illness.

The team, led by inventor, Dr. Art Tucker & Medical Research Lead, Professor Atholl Johnston, are the first to look at the restoration of normal physiological levels of these natural defences by delivering a liquid solution into the mouth and stomach of patients whose lungs are being mechanically ventilated. This is in stark contrast with previous work which has looked at the use of Nitric Oxide in the respiratory system, something the team wishes to avoid as it is potentially toxic if it gets into the lungs. All current therapies involve the use of antibiotics which carry a major issue with resistance.

More than 60,000 patients are mechanically ventilated in UK intensive care units annually, with an average stay of five days and a cost of more than £500m. Up to a third of these patients develop pneumonia. The team envisage that their treatment will be administered to all patients being placed on a ventilator to try and prevent them developing pneumonia.

BBC Breaking News For Medical Futures 2011