State Government grants help commercialise medical devices

A medical device developed by former Adelaide Crows player, now orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Matthew Liptak, is one of two projects to receive support under the South Australian Government’s Medical Technologies Program.

Manufacturing, Innovation and Trade Minister, Tom Kenyon said the program - a commitment under the State Government’s Manufacturing Works Strategy – brought local SA companies and public research organisations together to develop commercially viable medical technology products.

“The government is providing $750,000 over three years to Flinders University to implement the new program, which offers up to 250 hours of research and development assistance to help companies solve technical problems and test new technology,” Mr Kenyon said.

“The Medical Technologies Program (MTP) will be part of the well-established Medical Device Partnering Program at Flinders, which has helped more than 100 companies since being established in 2008.

Dr Liptak said he created the Post-Operative Rehabilitation Device to help his patients undertake rehabilitation exercises.

“It is a transportable device that can be used in the homes of patients who have undergone lower limb surgery or who have an injury to this area of their body,” Dr Liptak said.

“The great advantage of this device is that it shows the progress of rehabilitation exercises by measuring a patient’s range of movement.”

“The Medical Technologies Program support is assisting the commercialisation of his device.

“For a small investment, we were able to leverage the expertise of a range of specialists and we particularly found the workshop process extremely beneficial,” Dr Liptak said.

The second project to receive funding from the MTP is a device developed by ITEK Ventures Pty Ltd – the technology commercialisation company of the University of South Australia.

The Hand Held Magnetometer Probe is an ultrasensitive magnetic probe which detects small amounts of clinically introduced magnetic material in lymph nodes.

The probe accurately identifies the physical location of the sentinel lymph node and is used to determine the extent of cancer in the body.
Flinders University Program Director, Professor Karen Reynolds, said MTP funding would allow the university to move the product closer to market by providing electronic engineering expertise and end-user market feedback towards the project.

“The program provides an avenue for medical device companies and inventors to leverage support and expertise from a range of areas, for minimal investment and at low risk.

“Government support for this and other manufacturing programs is vital in stimulating innovation and bridging the gap between research activity and industry development,” Professor Reynolds said.