



## UCD spin-off sets up €3m R&D centre

A medical technology spin-out company from University College Dublin's (UCD) School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering has received funding €3m to establish an R&D centre in Belfast.

NovaUCD-based BiancaMed, which has developed a wireless sensor that can detect breathing and heart rate up to a distance of two metres, was set up in 2003 by Professor Conor Heneghan, Dr Philip de Chazal and Dr Conor Hanley, its chief executive.

BiancaMed has attracted funding of €358,577 (£250,000 sterling) from Invest Northern Ireland, plus a further €2.5m in venture capital support from Draper Fisher Jurvetson, ePlanet Ventures and ResMed to commercialise its research.

The first application for BiancaMed's technology is a baby monitor, but the technology can be developed for use in other applications with life-saving potential, such as home health and exercise monitors.

The company launched the technology at a major US international life sciences event in Boston in October called the 2007 Connected Health Symposium.

BiancaMed's new R&D operation will be set up at Queen's University Belfast Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT).

"This innovative technology has the potential to add significant momentum to the drive in modern healthcare towards effective care management for chronic diseases," said John Thompson, Invest Northern Ireland's director of innovation.

"Through direct application to products as well as licensing it to other companies, BiancaMed has the potential to access a global market for its unique technology."

Hanley said the company decided to locate its R&D centre in Belfast because of the cluster of world-class telecoms and healthcare technology firms operator that exists there, as well as an abundance of engineering talent.

"The opportunity to work closely with world-renowned research teams in ECIT to develop the technology and the support from Invest Northern Ireland were also important factors in attracting the company to Belfast," Hanley said.