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International Initiative To Speed Biotech Innovation In New Jersey

Patients will benefit from closer links between researchers, healthcare companies and doctors, thanks to a new cooperative agreement between the United Kingdom's White Rose Health Innovation Partnership (WHIP) and the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Princeton University, Rutgers University and University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

"This collaborative international effort is the first of its kind in the nation. It will boost life sciences innovation in New Jersey and contribute to the State's continued life sciences leadership." said Judith A. Sheft, Assistant Vice President of Technology Development at New Jersey Institute of Technology who played a principal role in establishing this initiative. The new initiative will focus on speeding delivery of new technologies, methodologies and practices into the medical and healthcare sector. It is designed to strengthen the region's world-class healthcare research and improve the flow of promising biotech technologies from the lab to patients.

Ultimately, academic researchers, clinicians, life science start up companies, biotechnology companies and large pharmaceutical manufacturers and industrial partners in New Jersey and the UK will be matched to reach this goal. In its initial phase, a joint baseline analysis of New Jersey's current capabilities, opportunities and barriers for translating health innovations from life science research into commercialized product, service or process capabilities and offerings will be conducted. A broad cross-section of State biotech and pharmaceutical, university life sciences research, business and government partners will be included in this survey.

"This study will allow us to clearly define potential barriers and opportunity areas in New Jersey's life sciences sector." comments William P. Steffens, Vice President of PSE&G's PSEG Area Development LLC, a leading advocate for life sciences growth in New Jersey and a driving force in creating this new international partnership. "In addition, this survey will begin to identify any "orphaned" intellectual property that can be further developed and commercialized in New Jersey and the UK."

Plans call for an electronic survey to be developed by mid- October. It will be widely circulated within the life sciences academic, clinical and industrial communities. "We will partner with the New Jersey Biotechnology and Life Sciences Coalition, the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, New Jersey Technology Council, Biotechnology Council of New Jersey and R&D Council of New Jersey to distribute the survey to their members." stated Stanley U. North III of the law firm Sills, Cummins, Epstein & Gross P.C., a driving force in creating this cooperative endeavor.

The electronic survey will collect demographic information about the respondents so that we can assess differences across the population types – academic researcher/ clinician/biotechnology company/ pharmaceutical manufacturer/medical device company etc. The survey will be conducted during late October and November 2006. As appropriate smaller focus sessions will be held with select smaller groups in conjunction with survey.