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A Cool World Success

The Medi+Cool Kit, designed and developed by Hornsby Hospital ICU staff, is attracting enormous interest from around the world following its official launch by the NSW Minister for Health last May.

After medical research showed that cooling patients down is beneficial in preserving the brain after a cardiac arrest, Sue Elder, clinical nurse consultant in Hornsby Hospital's ICU decided to look for a better alternative to ice which was the standard cooling system around the world.

In conjunction with the Artic Heat Company, Sue designed and developed the Medi+Cool Kit which is made up of pads impregnated with gel that are soaked in water and frozen.

The kit is still the only re-usable, portable, cooling system in the world to-day and has revolutionised the way patients who require cooling are treated. The Medi+Cool Kit looks to move well beyond its humble Hornsby beginnings with latest developments including:

- Approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration.
- Approval for sale within the European Common Market and FDA, and approval from the USA is imminent.
- Nike contracted to manufacture the kits.
- Multinational medical company Laederal has negotiated sole international distribution
- Agents appointed in Germany for Europe, the UK and USA.
- Three London hospitals currently trialling.
- Presentation to the European Resuscitation Council Congress in Norway.

The simplicity and effectiveness of the kit has convinced many who thought cooling was too hard to now introduce the practice. The kit's portability means that ambulance officers can now initiate cooling in the field and this has generated interest from the Navy, Fire Brigade and the Australian Army who are currently negotiating to have the kits in their field hospitals and on manoeuvres.

A new neonatal kit is also currently being trialled, with Laederal estimating sales of 10,000 kits in the UK alone. Interest in the Medi+Cool Kit is destined to grow with its use extending to head injury, burns and stroke. Studies on cooling post ischaemic stroke and neuro-trauma are now being released with positive results and once approved, cooling post stroke looks to become much bigger than for cardiac arrest.

And Hornsby will continue to benefit from the kit's success. Recognising the potential of the kit early on, intellectual property rights were secured and royalties from the kit will go to Hornsby's Nursing Education Fund.

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