

Patent protection for Steen Solution™ in Australia

Vitrolife has been informed that patent protection has been granted in Australia for Steen Solution™, a solution for functional testing and reconditioning of lungs outside the body before transplantation. The product was approved for sales in Europe in January.

Vitrolife's product Steen Solution™ is part of a new method for functional testing, reconditioning and preservation of lungs outside the body. The technology enables heart-dead donors' lungs, or lungs from brain-dead patients which are initially assessed as doubtful, to be tested outside the body for possible use. The number of organs that may be transplanted thus increases considerably. The method and the solution have been developed by Professor Stig Steen at the University Hospital in Lund in collaboration with Vitrolife. In May 2005, Steen's transplantation team successfully carried out the second lung transplantation in man using this new technology.

The patent for Steen Solution™ in Australia is valid until 2021. The patent contains both product and method requirements, which means that both the composition of the solution and its use are protected by the patent. A patent application has been submitted for Steen Solution™ in all markets that are assessed to be important and Australia is the first country where approval has been obtained.

Vitrolife is today the market leader within the area of lung preservation solutions through its product Perfadex® and approximately 90 percent of all lung transplantations in the world are performed using this product. Perfadex®, together with Steen Solution™, is also part of the new method for functional testing and preservation of lungs outside the body. This medical breakthrough can in time lead to a five-fold to ten-fold increase in the number of lung transplantations that are carried out, as the need for donated organs using today's methods considerably exceeds supply. As the technology differs considerably from what has been used previously, Vitrolife anticipates that the introduction will be carried out gradually, starting at the more research-intensive and experienced clinics. However, the initial position is very favourable, as Vitrolife is known through Perfadex® in by and large all the lung transplantation centres in the world.

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Vitrolife is a global biotechnology/medical device Group that works with developing, manufacturing and selling advanced products and systems for the preparation, cultivation and storage of human cells, tissue and organs. The company has business activities within three product areas: Fertility, Transplantation and Cell Therapy. The Fertility product area works with nutrient solutions (media) and advanced one-time instruments such as needles and pipettes, for the treatment of human infertility. The Transplantation product area works with solutions and systems to maintain tissue in optimal condition outside the body for the required time while waiting for transplantation. The Cell Therapy product area works with media to enable the use of stem cells for therapeutic purposes.

Vitrolife today has approximately 110 employees and the company's products are sold in more than 80 markets. The head office is in Kungälv, Sweden, and there are subsidiaries outside Gothenburg, Sweden and in Denver, USA. The Vitrolife share is listed on the O-list of the Stockholm Stock Exchange.

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