

Scottish textile technology helps cancer patients

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Micro-encapsulated textiles, which offer added comfort as well as aromatherapeutic benefits to cancer patients, are now being used in a luxury handmade headwear range, Asha.

The range is launched this week by Borders-based textile company, Murray Hogarth, who worked closely on the final product with Heriot-Watt University's School of [Textiles](#) and Design and South of Scotland Business Solutions (SoSBS).

The turbans, headscarves and accessories in the Asha range, offer a range of finishes such as lavender and other aromatherapy oils and thermo-regulated textiles, aimed at helping cancer patients.

One of the finishes incorporates minute, airtight, hard shell capsules containing a chosen scent being welded to the textile fibre. When the garment is worn, friction causes the capsules to burst, releasing a subtle fragrance, such as aloe vera or lavender.

There are many different types of micro-encapsulated textile finishes, everything from UV ray management and temperature regulation to vitamins and moisturisers, any of which could be incorporated to suit specific needs.

Professor Alison Harley, Head of Heriot-Watt University's School of Textiles and Design, said, "Smart textiles are a fast-developing sector that offers enormous potential within the healthcare industry.

"This collaboration showcases our close work with industry, including many small and medium size textile businesses in Scotland, to help them find ways to add value and grow their business.

"Murray Hogarth is a great example of the ways in which we can help Scottish textile businesses to develop and bring exciting new products to market."

Jim McVee, Business Development Manager at the School of Textiles and Design said, "My brief was to assist Murray Hogarth with the development of a well being garment for women who are having chemo or radiotherapy and which could help with some of the side effects associated with the treatment.

"Fashion Technology at the School developed prototypes and we also

recommended that an enhanced finish be added to the fabrics to add further value to the product. This would turn an ordinary garment in to one which would offer the customer different solutions to potential side effects of their treatment. We also helped Murray Hogarth to find a manufacturer who could produce the quantities they needed."

Asha will be supporting Maggie's Cancer Charity by donating 10 per cent of all sales to the charity.

Maggie's Senior Corporate Fundraising Manager, Gemma Branney, said, "Any kind of work or research, such as that carried out by Heriot-Watt University's School of Textiles and Design, to develop [smart textiles](#) to help women with cancer-related hair loss is hugely welcome.

"We are also delighted that Asha are choosing to donate 10% of their sales to Maggie's.

"At Maggie's we rely on the generosity of the communities surrounding our centres to ensure that we can open our doors to support local people affected by cancer. We would like to thank Asha for raising funds to help us keep our doors open."

Provided by Heriot-Watt University

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