

Breakthrough heart health diagnostics company formed

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Associate Professor Chris Pemberton

A new company that could revolutionise the accurate diagnosis of heart conditions was launched in Christchurch, New Zealand today.

Upstream Medical Technologies [UMT] is being formed by the University of Otago and Powerhouse Ventures Ltd to commercialise technology that has been developed by an internationally recognised research team led by Professor Mark Richards and Associate Professor Chris Pemberton. The team is part of the University of Otago's

Christchurch Heart Institute.

One of the team's key developments is the identification in blood of a class of [protein fragments](#) known as signal peptides.

"These protein fragments, once identified, can be monitored for medical diagnostics relating to heart health," says Associate Professor Chris Pemberton.

"UMT has developed a world-first test to potentially speed up the diagnosis of unstable angina, a serious cardiac condition that is difficult and time consuming for doctors and is a major area of unmet clinical diagnostics."

Colin Dawson, Chief Operating Officer of Powerhouse Ventures, says that UMT is based on ground breaking, exciting work, which has widespread international implications and benefits.

"Our investment is a critical first step for this development and for UMT, a company that has many more innovations it is working on.

"This research has the potential to have a significant impact in hospitals around the world, and has enormous commercial prospects.

"Our investment will fund further refinement of the test and larger clinical trials, all of which are important and necessary steps in developing the product," says Dawson.

The global market for [unstable angina](#) diagnostics is estimated at over US\$1billion.

Otago Innovation, the commercialisation arm of the University of Otago, has been working with Powerhouse Ventures Ltd for almost 12 months

to develop UMT. Other financial support has come from Callaghan Innovation's repayable loan scheme and NZVIF is also a co-investment partner.

Provided by University of Otago

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