

iThera Medical to Lead €2.3m Research Project to Advance Inflammatory Bowel Imaging Technologies

The new project will pave the way to establish Multispectral Optoacoustic Tomography (MSOT) as a diagnostic tool for inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). This novel non-invasive diagnostic method promises to reduce discomfort for IBD patients during their examination and improve the quality of care.

MUNICH ([PRWEB](#)) February 20, 2019 -- The European Commission has awarded a €2.3 million 'Fast Track to Innovation' project grant to a consortium led by the Munich-based medical device company iThera Medical. Funded under the European Innovation Council (EIC) pilot, the aim of the grant is to improve the sensitivity and effectiveness of MSOT, Multispectral Optoacoustic Tomography, in detecting and managing inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD). Beyond technical improvements, the new project, 'EUPHORIA' (Enhancing Ultrasound and PHotoacoustics for Recognition of Intestinal Abnormalities) will also support the transition of MSOT from clinical research use to routine diagnosis.

IBD is a common chronic condition, where patients suffer from recurring episodes of intestinal inflammation. Currently, it is diagnosed and monitored using endoscopy which causes patient discomfort and potentially severe complications such as colon perforation. MSOT has the potential for rapid, simple and non-invasive detection and monitoring of IBD, by pulsing laser light through the skin, and then interpreting the acoustic signals generated by light absorption in the colon wall. The system generates ultrasound and optoacoustic images that enable the assessment of inflammation in the colon wall. Because of its non-invasive nature, MSOT can be used more often, and thus could improve monitoring of patients in remission and during treatment. Dr. Philipp Bell, Chief Commercial Officer of iThera Medical, emphasizes the potential of MSOT in the context of EUPHORIA: "We are excited that the EUPHORIA funding will allow us to bring a non-invasive and fast diagnostic tool to doctors and IBD patients, thereby significantly improving quality of care and patient comfort."

EUPHORIA will be delivered by a consortium of leading European companies. The coordinator is iThera Medical, which develops and markets imaging systems using the MSOT technology. Other partners include IMASONIC (France), a leader in ultrasound detector technology, RAYFOS (UK), a company specializing in image processing software, University Hospital Erlangen (Germany), a site of clinical excellences for preclinical and clinical IBD research, and Pintail Limited (Ireland), an SME specializing in the management of large international research projects, in science communication and outreach, and bridging the gap between excellent research and market launch.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant no. 830965.

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