

FOCUS ON:

Medical Technology



In 1991, Genzyme, a leading biotechnology company, chose to establish its European headquarters in Naarden, the Netherlands. This center has grown to 400 highly skilled employees with diversified backgrounds.

“The level of education in the Netherlands, stability in the fiscal and economic climate and quality of life for foreign employees are all major factors in our decision to continue our expansion of operations,” says Genzyme Senior Executive Jan van Heek. Genzyme serves as a good example of a company taking advantage of the medical technology

resources available in the Netherlands.

Companies, institutions, and universities participating in medical technologies here work closely and vigorously together. Specialties include expertise in such areas as cancer research, infectious diseases, clinical research, and medical imaging for preventive healthcare. Aside from Genzyme, leading companies in the life sciences have offices in the Netherlands, including Amgen, Centocor, MedimmunePharma, New Brunswick Scientific, and Bio-Rad Laboratories.

A vast network of high-tech teams with

medical know-how and capabilities continually develops innovative products and techniques. The Dutch government supports this ongoing growth by encouraging numerous partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Cancer Research

The year 2007 saw the launch of the Center for Translational Molecular Medicine (CTMM), a public-private partnership that aims to cut Dutch cancer deaths by 20 percent within ten years. The Center augments the significant progress being made in preventing and curing a broad range of cancers. Effective techniques include innovative screening programs, genomic testing, new therapies, and advances in personalized medicine.

Clinical Research

A broad range of pharmaceutical, biotech, and contract research organizations take advantage of a first-class infrastructure for phase I to IV clinical trials within the Netherlands. Multiple institutes and private companies support these efforts, leading to fast and valuable results. A receptive Dutch population participates in clinical trials, indicating a high level of confidence in the healthcare system.

Infectious Diseases

This industry, organized via the Dutch Vaccine Group, has an excellent track record in such areas such as HIV, West Nile virus, and anthrax. In response to concerns about future flu pandemics and use of biological weapons, the public and private sectors are investing in the development of specialized vaccines. World-class research

institutes, business infrastructure, and focused startups work closely together towards these aims.

Medical Imaging

The Netherlands is one of the top contributors to the imaging industry, especially in medical imaging patents. Large Dutch companies like Philips, along with specialized small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and research organizations, are doing pioneering work in this area. The driving forces for this boom in medical imaging are rapid technological advances coupled with the need for low-cost healthcare.

Life Science and Health Innovation

2008 saw the launch of the Life Sciences and Health Innovation program in the Netherlands. This program embraces three medical areas:

- Top Institute Pharma
- Center for Translational Molecular Medicine, and
- Biomedical Materials Program.



Source: Epsicom World Medical Products Forecast, 2007

Goals are to improve the overall climate for successful product development and to encourage global cooperation.

Financed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, this program will inject one billion euros into some 100 projects over the next five years. Funds will go to a Eurotransbio subsidy, equipment, and cooperative projects with SMEs. The program allocates 2.5 million euros a year to encourage scientists to become entrepreneurs.

Two strategic regions

Two regions in the Netherlands dominate activities within the medical technology sector: Noord-Brabant/Limburg, a strategic location in the south, and the West Holland region, a hub of international business and diplomatic activity.

Noord-Brabant/Limburg – Medical technology is strongly represented in “The Source,” a region including the southern provinces of the Netherlands and the northern provinces of Flanders (Belgium). The human health sector in this region constitutes about 50,000 employees, output of 31 billion euros, more than 10 universities and research institutes, and several academic hospitals.

Brabant has a strong reputation for bringing new products to market. Many SMEs act as subcontractors and suppliers of high quality precision tooling.

Brabant accounts for 40 percent of total private R&D in the Netherlands, of which the medical sector is a major contributor. Strong connections exist between medical companies and medical profession institutes, universities and centers of academic

research and development. Brabant’s manufacturing industry has a 21 percent share of total Dutch value-added.

Examples of leading hospitals and medical institutes actively involved in R&D include the CTMM in Eindhoven and the Dr. Bernard Verbeeten Institute in Tilburg, an independent institute for radio therapeutic cancerology and nuclear medicine.

West Holland – This region centers on the Randstad, linking the Netherlands’ financial center, Amsterdam, with Europe’s largest port and distribution network, Rotterdam. Two-thirds of the foreign companies have facilities in the Randstad. More than 800 international companies operate in this region, representing over 50 different countries.

The Medtech/Bio Science cluster resides at the BioScience Park in Leiden, the largest dedicated life sciences cluster in the Netherlands, from multinationals to starters, from companies focused on research to manufacturing companies. About 60 life sciences companies, representing all phases of business development, employ more than 3,500 people.

The West Holland region is also home to some of the Netherlands’ top universities and research facilities. Examples include Leiden University, Delft University of Technology, Medical Genetics Centre of the Southwest Netherlands and the Dutch Organization for Applied Scientific Research Institute.

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