



Curie-Cancer and Biolog-id sign partnership agreement to develop a traceability system for cancer chemotherapy preparations

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Within the partnership, Curie-Cancer and Biolog-id will develop a pilot system of RFID tags suitable for use in tracking cancer chemotherapy preparations

Curie-Cancer, the body responsible for developing Institut Curie's industry partnership activity and Biolog-id, a French SME which develops, manufactures and markets complete labeling and traceability solutions under some 20 international patents, today announce a partnership to develop an RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) solution for use in tracking chemotherapy bags. The collaboration aims to make it possible to comprehensively track chemotherapy preparations through the whole process, from centralized pharmacy preparation through to administration to patients in health care settings.

Within a multi-site hospital setting like the Institut Curie, the drug circuit is a structured process involving multiple functions. The larger the number of steps (prescribing, preparing, dispensing and administering), clinical stakeholders (doctors, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and nurses) and information and product flows, the more complex the process and the greater the potential for error. Administering one particular patient's chemotherapy preparation to another patient may have tragic consequences, but it is incredibly rare. A more common occurrence, however, is that a preparation intended for one health care department is routed to another. The considerable cost of some cancer drugs and the disruption to activity within the department mean that this can have significant consequences. Against a background of cost control and safety and quality in health care it is crucial for any technological response to reflect standard practice.

With extensive experience in the field of blood bag traceability, Biolog-id intends to apply its expertise to the monitoring and tracking of chemotherapy bags. Based on a label that incorporates an electronic RFID tag and is affixed to every preparation, this innovation represents a technological breakthrough: tag information is updated automatically at different stages of the process (preparation, transportation and administration). Preparations therefore become 'intelligent', offering the scope for storage of additional information, such as drug dosage, patient identity, stages in manufacture and inspection and routing. The concept also aims to improve safety in health care over time by guaranteeing complete traceability for all unit dose preparations dispensed for a named individual, including parenteral nutrition, dialysis bags and other injectable preparations.

Biolog-id was therefore looking for a hospital facility with an interest in developing this type of solution and with the capacity for testing and allocating health care staff time to provide the clinical expertise required.

"We were interested in this idea right from the start," said Marion Lafay-Bourquin, pharmacist, and Christian Magne, manager within the Pharmacy department. "Over time one of the potential applications for this technology is in tracking preparations shared by the Institut Curie's different hospital sites."

The project involves over a dozen people, with the initial aim of defining the technical specifications for Biolog-id's proposed traceability solution in conjunction with medical staff, then testing it in parallel with the existing

system. Biolog-id's goal is to verify the pilot solution in place at the Institut Curie, then make it available to other institutions in France and worldwide.

"As an SME, it is not always easy to access academic expertise. However, to stay competitive, it is something we have to do," said Jean-Claude Mongrenier, chairman and CEO of Biolog-id. "There was an immediate rapport with Curie-Cancer, because they, like us, were aiming to improve the safety of patient care and reduce costs. In addition, they had a clear desire to help an SME and to support us in developing our plans, which we definitely appreciated."

"We are delighted to be able to contribute to the development of a French SME like Biolog-id," said Damien Salauze, director of Curie-Cancer "This is the essence of the Institut Carnot label which we were awarded by the French government in 2011 in recognition of our drive to provide concrete solutions for industry and ultimately for patients. Our partnerships usually involve a significant element of laboratory-based research work, but I am delighted that our expertise in hospital settings also addresses the requirements of other types of industrial partner."

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