



**For Immediate Release – September 2004**

### **Health e-commerce in Pharmacy seeks new partners**

Faster and more accurate receipts of pharmaceutical products were achieved during the Monash Medical Centre demonstration project (also known as the e-Commerce within the Hospital Pharmaceutical Supply Chain project) have spurred on the project team's commitment to further develop e-commerce capabilities for Victoria's pharmaceutical supply chain using EAN.UCC standards.

The first phase of the demonstration project involved transactions between Southern Health's pharmacy department at Monash Medical Centre (MMC) and three pharmaceutical suppliers, representing small, medium and large companies: Clifford Hallam Pharmaceuticals, Hospital Supplies of Australia (H.S.A.) and Orion Laboratories. Key project stakeholders included Health Purchasing Victoria (HPV), the National Supply Chain Reform Task Force (NSCRTF), Pharmhos Software, project manager, EAN Australia and the Victorian Government, which awarded the project team a grant of \$50, 000 under the e-Commerce Exhibition Projects Program (ECEPP).

The aim of the project was to demonstrate similar benefits for the health industry as those being achieved within the Australian grocery industry in terms of order processing savings, increased accuracy and enhanced delivery performance. The project demonstrated distinct increases in the speed and accuracy of goods receipt. Those benefits have encouraged the project participants, including MMC, to push for more work to be undertaken on e-commerce in the health industry.

"The project has been a great success and a very positive experience for all involved," said Ian Larmour, Director of Pharmacy, Southern Health.

"The successful completion of phase one of the project has been possible because of the spirit and cooperation between all parties. Much has been learned and this has given Southern Health a clear path forward."

The project report illustrates the need to evaluate and rethink existing business processes when adopting e-commerce, rather than simply applying new technologies to entrenched practices. The report outlines the critical learnings to facilitate others in a successful launch of an e-commerce project.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2004, at the Victorian Innovation Centre, the project team will present the lessons learned from each team member's perspective. A written project case study will also be made available. In addition, the project was recently promoted at the Victorian Directors of Pharmacy Conference and the Society of Hospital Pharmacists Conference.

Currently the project team is pursuing new partners and further funding to move beyond the phase one \$50,000 grant from the Victorian Government towards the



development of a pilot process (phase two) and ultimately full-scale commercial implementation for all parties (phase three). As a result a submission for a Science and Technology Initiative grant has been made.

During phase two, the project team will review the phase one processes and refine the implementation procedures before rolling out the e-commerce system to all five Pharmacy Departments within Southern Health hospitals and canvassing a further 20 companies to actively participate.

Phase two of the project will seek to research the use of services such as EANnet and emerging technologies to address some of the initial key learnings. In a first for the industry, phase two will also see examination of the use of reduced space symbology (RSS) bar codes on products, which would allow the bar coding of individual products at unit of use level, rather than cartons, with batch number and expiry date. This ultimately will enable traceability of the dispensing of pharmaceuticals to the patient.

Interested wholesalers, suppliers and hospitals are encouraged to phone Sue Schmid, Project Manager, EAN Australia, for more information on 1300 366 033.



## **Background**

### **e-Commerce Exhibition Projects Program (ECEPP)**

ECEPP aims to support clusters of Victorian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in key sectors of the Victorian economy to develop innovative approaches to B2B e-commerce that can reduce their costs, improve business relationships, save time and/or expand their markets.

ECEPP funding has been provided to SMEs in fields such as retail, construction, food processing, agriculture, transport and manufacturing. The Victorian Government funds up to 50 per cent of the cost of an individual project.

ECEPP is part of *Victoria's E-Commerce Advantage*, the Victorian Government's framework for increasing the uptake of e-commerce. This framework builds on the Victorian Government's *Connecting Victoria* policy.

### **EAN Australia**

EAN Australia is the local Member of EAN International. The mission of EAN International and the Member Organisations is to take a leading role in establishing a global multi-industry system of identification and communication for products, services and locations based on internationally accepted and business led standards – The EAN•UCC system. The objective is to improve the efficiency of integrated logistics while contributing added value to partners involved, as well as to consumers. [www.ean.com.au](http://www.ean.com.au)

### **Clifford Hallam Pharmaceuticals**

Clifford Hallam Pharmaceuticals is one of Australia's leading pharmaceutical and medical consumable distributors to the hospital and healthcare sector. Established in 1973, this Australian company has established a strong national reputation over the last three decades.

### **Monash Medical Centre**

Monash Medical Centre is the largest hospital within Southern Health and is one of Victoria's major teaching and tertiary referral hospitals. MMC, which has over 700 beds, provides medical and surgical services, maternity services, palliative care and adult, adolescent and child mental health inpatient services requiring complex and multidisciplinary activity and significant technological support.

### **HSA (Hospital Supplies of Australia)**

HSA specialises in providing Australia's largest range of hospital products including pharmaceuticals, medical & surgical consumables, equipment, agency and general products. HSA provides distribution solutions and efficiencies to hospitals and health care facilities throughout Australia. HSA has been the leader in hospital electronic order and information systems with its Simple-Order-System (SOS).

### **Orion**

ORION Laboratories Pty Ltd was founded in 1985. It and markets an extensive range of ORION branded products including prescription products, over-the-counter medicines, formulated devices and antiseptics. ORION also offers contract-manufacturing services to other organisations and hospitals seeking specialised products manufactured in a TGA approved facility. Visit at [www.orion.net.au](http://www.orion.net.au)

### **Health Purchasing Victoria**

Health Purchasing Victoria commenced in July 2001 and has a responsibility to facilitate reform of the procurement system for Victorian hospitals and health services. This organisation reports to the Minister for Health.