

Intellectual property (IP) workshop – looking for ‘hidden IP’

Part of the job of Canterbury DHB's Medical Physics and Bioengineering (MPBE) team is to partner with clinicians and patients, working together to co-develop customised equipment and software.

The aim of these product design collaborations is to provide practical, cost-effective engineering solutions to problems identified by clinical teams, says Clinical Innovation Director - Via Innovations Helen Lunt.

“Sometimes, the ideas that emerge from this ‘clinician plus engineer’ co-design process are so new and innovative, that they might benefit from intellectual property (IP) protection, on behalf of Canterbury DHB.”

An IP Strategy workshop for MPBE staff was held a month ago and was sponsored by Via Innovations, a business unit within Canterbury DHB. The workshop was led by Simon Rowell, an IP expert from Hamilton.

“He helped Canterbury DHB attendees look at several real-world examples of innovations from a fresh Intellectual property perspective, including asking them if they could work out where there might be ‘hidden IP’ in healthcare products,” Helen says.

A lot of potential IP features were identified within their own MPBE product designs. For example, the colour combinations in a 3-D printed gadget which aimed to make it easier for patients to use, showed innovative design thinking.



Medical Physics and Bioengineering team members attending the recent workshop on intellectual property

The MPBE team left the workshop with a fresh perspective on how to identify ‘hidden’ IP.

If you have an idea that you think MPBE may be able to help with, contact Team Leader Bioengineering, [Michael Sheedy](#).

If you have an innovative idea that you want to discuss with the Via Innovations team, contact Innovation Director, [Anya Hornsey](#).

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