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New Jersey Health Foundation Awards First Two Innovation Stage Funding Grants

New Brunswick, NJ – Dr. Tomer Davidov and Dr. William C. Gause are the first two recipients of grants from New Jersey Health Foundation’s Innovation Stage Funding Program to advance their medical research that could eventually be commercialized for consumer benefit.

Dr. Davidov, an assistant professor of surgery at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick, is developing a novel puncture resistant surgical glove that will offer healthcare professionals the highest level of needle stick protection without compromising tactile sensation and manual dexterity.

“Needle-stick injury is a common problem among healthcare professions, with 4 million estimated injuries annually in the United States,” Dr. Davidov said. “One study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that a staggering 99% of surgeons reported a needle stick injury during their training alone, 53% of which were with high risk patients. It is no wonder that 96% of surveyed surgeons are concerned about contracting HIV or Hepatitis C as a result of needle stick injuries.”

According to Dr. Davidov, current tear resistant gloves use thicker standard material, but do not provide true needle stick puncture protection. He will use the grant from the Innovation Stage Funding Program to develop the prototype for a surgical glove that uses a novel manufacturing process and a newly developed puncture resistant, flexible, paper-thin material.

Dr. Gause, the senior associate dean for research at New Jersey Medical School in Newark, has developed a new approach to enhance the treatment of wound healing using compositions derived from metazoan parasites at the site of an injury. His grant will be used to further develop a potential commercial product.

“Chronic wounds represent a significant burden to patients, healthcare professionals and the US healthcare system, affecting 5.7 million patients and costing an estimated 20 billion dollars annually,” said Dr. Gause. “Our research to date shows that the characteristic type of immune response triggered by macroparasites has active components that can enhance tissue repair and wound healing.”

Through the Innovation Stage Funding Program, New Jersey Health Foundation has allocated \$500,000 to provide grants from \$10,000 up to \$50,000 each to researchers with promising ideas to advance an intellectual property toward commercialization through a start-up. At the current time, researchers with these objectives affiliated with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) are able to apply for funding.

For more information and to check eligibility, visit the *What’s New* section at www.foundationofumdnj.org.

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About New Jersey Health Foundation

New Jersey Health Foundation (www.njhf.org), established in 2002 as a not-for-profit public charity, is the parent company to the Foundation of UMDNJ (www.foundationofumdnj.org) and The Foundation for Healthcare Advancement (www.foundationforhealthcareadvancement.org), which solicit private sector support for the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and to Foundation Venture Capital Group, LLC, (www.foundationventure.com) which makes private equity investments in start-up technology companies founded by researchers affiliated with the University.

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