

System May Fill Hole for Attention Deficit Patients

REGULATION: Approval by E.U. could mean big boost for NeuroSigma's eTNS.

MANY parents of children suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder wrestle with whether or not to medicate their kids. But Westwood medical device maker **NeuroSigma Inc.** has developed an alternative, which just got the European Union's stamp of approval to treat ADHD in adults as well as children ages 7 and older.

NeuroSigma's Monarch eTNS System wires a pulse generator to a Band-Aid-like patch placed on a patient's forehead. Usually worn overnight, the noninvasive system gently stimulates a large cranial nerve through the skin, targeting and altering activity in specific brain regions involved with disorders such as epilepsy and depression.

Though the E.U. had already authorized it to treat epilepsy and depression, NeuroSigma considers this latest blessing a big deal because the system was approved for use on its own and not in combination with another therapy.

"This is a major event for the company," said Chief Executive **Leon Ekchian**. "We're delighted we ... can move forward commercializing eTNS."

NeuroSigma had been focusing on selling its technology to major medical centers, but it's now ready to concentrate more on commercialization, establishing supply chains and building a sales force.

Though only cleared for investigational use in the United States, clinical trials are underway with an eye toward Food and Drug Administration approval in certain cases. The firm has already submitted an application to

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be used in combination with other treatment for the symptoms of Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, a rare neurological condition in children. If granted, this could be the company's first U.S. approval for any of its products.

NeuroSigma had remained relatively mum about much of its progress for the past year while it was under a Securities and Exchange Commission registration for an initial public offering. But that's been pushed off due to market conditions.

"Timing is important," Ekchian said. "Right now the general perspective of the banking community is market conditions are not ideal."

In Network

Doctor house-call app **Heal** recently achieved its own milestone; getting the nod from two major insurers to cover its physician home visits under certain health insurance plans.

The Santa Monica company announced earlier this month that it's now in-network with many large-group and small-group PPO plans offered by **Anthem Blue Cross of California** and **Blue Shield of California**. In other words, Heal's app-arranged house calls, arriving in an hour or less, are now covered for those members at the same rate as traditional office visits for services such as physician and wellness exams.

"It's always been our plan to have insur-

ance coverage and credentialing," said Heal Chief Executive Dr. **Renee Dua**, who co-founded the startup in February with her husband, serial entrepreneur **Nick Desai**. "Becoming in-network takes time."

Though Dua couldn't provide concrete examples of how the insurers' varying reimbursement rates compare with Heal's flat \$99 fee for the uninsured, she said sometimes it's a great opportunity from a financial perspective and other times not as much.

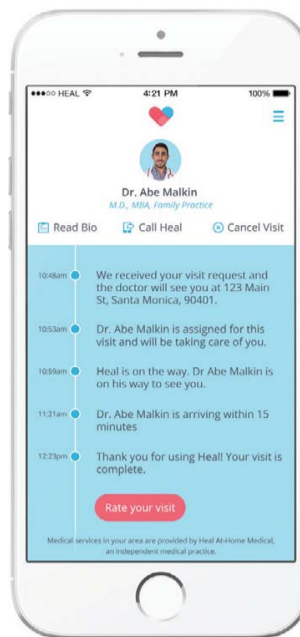
But going in-network with insurance providers was attractive, Dua said, mostly because it opens the door to more patients. She pointed out that Heal has now served more than 1,000 customers and expanded its coverage beyond the Westside to most of Los Angeles and Orange counties, San Francisco and Palo Alto.

She plans on having Heal in 15 markets by the end of next year and working with more health plans.

"Anthem (and other insurers) want their customers to be happy and I think everyone else will follow suit," she said.

Sticking to Plan

Brentwood digital health firm **h2 wellness** recently launched a customized version of its online health-engagement platform for Denver weight loss company **Atkins Nutritionals Inc.**



On Call: Heal's app.

H2 develops cloud-based health portals that crunch data to coach users toward wellness goals. The firm's sweet spot is effecting behavioral change by helping other firms improve their customers' adherence to health-related plans, such as an Atkins diet, or by keeping them engaged in a company's wellness-related services.

For example, h2's algorithm can ping a person's smartphone at lunch time, recognizing he or she is near a certain restaurant and offer advice on which menu item to choose. Or it might log visits to the gym, congratulating a user when they've worked out.

The firm offers a few different versions of its platform. There's a standard noncustomizable version for health clubs that costs the gym a few hundred dollars a month. A highly customizable portal, which Atkins uses, runs hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Costs vary depending on how many locations and number of users a portal is serving.

Co-founder and Chief Executive **Hooman Fakki** said h2 has learned that such programs need to be highly sensitive to each user's specific situation.

"Just gaining data from someone is important but not enough," Fakki said. "Five different diabetics could be on a similar program but each has a different motivation level."

Staff reporter Marni Usheroff can be reached at musheroff@labusinessjournal.com or (323) 549-5225, ext. 229.

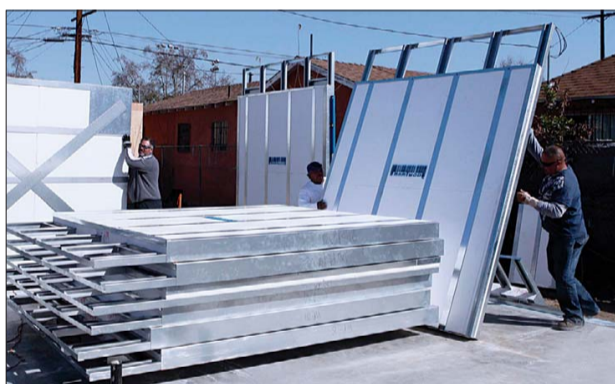
Designer Garner Some Support for New Frames

CONSTRUCTION: Changes to state's building code may lift creator's products.

DESIGNER-turned-manufacturer **Erla Dögg Ingjaldsdóttir** has learned the long, hard lessons of marketing a new product to an old industry.

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Big Lift: Components of mmmMOD's frame system.

the panels approved by the cities of Santa Monica, Los Angeles and Culver City for use in building structure.

But after all that, it was hard to find buyers, Ingjaldsdóttir said. She and her husband, **Tryggvi Thorsteinsson**, both architects from Iceland, incorporated the panels into houses and structures they designed themselves – but they were basically the only users. **Habitat for Humanity** also used the panel systems in three homes built in and around Los Angeles by volunteers, she added, but that was it.

"Building materials haven't changed in years and years, and that's why it's been taking us so long," Ingjaldsdóttir said. "We are constantly trying to educate those who are trying to listen. But this is the future."

But now, the panel systems are finally sparking interest from architects and designers, Ingjaldsdóttir said, thanks to California's newer building codes. Specifically, California Code of Regulations' Title 24, which toughened energy-efficiency requirements for residential and nonresidential buildings, and similar building codes asking for less wood,

fewer chemical-emitting materials and reduced construction material waste, have made buying Ingjaldsdóttir's panels a more compelling proposition.

"These (codes) are only going to get harder to meet," Ingjaldsdóttir said. "This has definitely opened doors for us."

Chinese Checkers

Signal Hill manufacturer of pollution reduction systems **Ship & Shore**

Environmental Inc. is positioning itself as a solution to China's increasing dirty air problems. As part of the effort, the company is partnering with a Chinese firm to get a foot in the door with local industrial producers and manufacturers.

Ship & Shore has teamed up with **Kcalin H&G**, an auto parts manufacturer near Beijing, to build nonproprietary parts of Ship & Shore's air pollution capture and control systems, said Chief Executive **Anoosheh Oskouian**. Proprietary parts of Ship & Shore's systems will still be made in Signal Hill, she added.

The partnership supports the Singapore office that Ship & Shore opened earlier this year to take advantage of what it anticipates to be a burgeoning market for its technology as China gets ready to introduce new regulations limiting emissions releases, Oskouian said.

"There's a lot of demand there; we are just scratching the surface," she said. "Because of the growth there, companies have increased their manufacturing capabilities – but with



Frane

nothing in place (previously) to control pollution, so it's become worse and worse."

Ship & Shore's Chinese division hasn't signed any contracts yet for its systems with local manufacturers, Oskouian said, but several are pending.

The companies' first joint venture was an exhibit at the Conference of Jiangsu New Environmental Protection Technology, an expo on environmental management and pollution.

School Days

Local architects **John Frane** and **Hadrian Predock** closed the doors of their 15-year-old Venice architecture firm **Predock Frane Architects** in August.

Frane joined the Santa Monica office of **HGA Architects and Engineers** in Minneapolis in September as principal, and he also teaches at USC's School of Architecture.

Predock has been serving as director of undergraduate programs at university's School of Architecture since 2014. He had been a faculty member at **UCLA's** Department of Architecture and Urban Design, according to USC.

Frane was not available for comment but said in a statement at the time of the firm's closing that the new environment will give him a chance to explore different and innovative ideas and concepts.

Staff reporter Carol Lawrence can be reached at clawrence@labusinessjournal.com or (323) 549-5225, ext. 237.