

Health: Get a load of this new brain scanner that Compumedics has installed

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A six-year-old in the paediatric helmet of the Compumedics Orion LifeSpan™ MEG at Barrow Neurological Institute. Pic: Compumedics

It might look like something out of a sci-fi movie, but be assured this is non-fiction: medical devices company **Compumedics (ASX:CMP)** has installed what it says is the first magnetoencephalography machine in almost 20 years.

Magnetoencephalography, shortened to MEG, is brain-scanning done by recording magnetic fields produced by electrical currents occurring naturally in the brain, using very sensitive magnetometers.

And Compumedics' product, which it is calling Neuroscan Orion LifeSpan, is now in the initial stages of commissioning at renowned neuroscience centre Barrow Neurological Institute in Arizona in the US.

Compumedics, which is also in the process of submitting an application the US Food and Drug Administration to allow the device to be used clinically, says it is the first "completely new design of a commercial MEG instrument to be delivered and installed" in almost 20 years.

The device claims advanced Superconducting Quantum Interference Device (SQUID) detectors for unparalleled sensitivity to brain signals, reduced operating costs and a low-noise, high-density electroencephalogram (EEG) monitoring system.

Dr Michael Stein, MEG medical director at BNI, hoped FDA approval would come post-haste.

“We are extraordinarily pleased with the Orion LifeSpan MEG and the much-needed enhanced brain imaging capability it will allow BNI to offer our patients. We are eager to begin MEG measurements for our clinical epilepsy program, which will bring improved surgical outcomes from this debilitating disorder,” he said.

“On the research side, the Orion will offer greater insights into the fundamental workings of both healthy and pathological brain function.”

Dr David Burton said it opened the company up to a “multi-billion dollar” brain imaging market.

“We can think of no better institution to take advantage of this new MEG technology and fully showcase the improved ability to detect functional brain signals. We look forward to many years of fruitful collaboration with their distinguished professionals and further advancements in the field of magnetoencephalography.

“The BNI Orion LifeSpan MEG installation and first stage of commissioning marks a unique inflection point in Compumedics’ evolution to date, paving the way for a major new global market for the Company. Ultimately this new generation brain function scanner is uniquely positioned to transform brain-health and improve people’s lives, worldwide.”

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