



## EDITORIAL

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### **QCTN – recognised internationally as Australia’s one-stop-shop and a stepping-stone for world-wide clinical drug development**

The Queensland Clinical Trials Network Inc. (QCTN) brand is increasingly being recognised on the international stage. Recently, Mario Pennisi attended DIA in Atlanta and when meeting with delegates from Japan, it was established they had already heard about QCTN from an article in a Japanese newspaper. This article resulted from a previous activity co-ordinated by the Queensland Government Trade & Investment Office (QGITO) in Tokyo.

This is great news as it demonstrates how important it is for QCTN to work together with the available international infrastructure provided by the QGITO to build on the world-class infrastructure and reputation that the service providers in Queensland enjoy.

Earlier this year, QCTN and several members attended the 2007 BIO International Convention. Held in May in Boston, the event drew a record 22,366 attendees, nearly 15% increase from the previous year, with representatives from 48 states and 64 countries. The convention made national and international news with policy announcements, innovative exhibitors and keynotes from industry leaders and advocates. QCTN and nine member organisations were well represented, and with about 5000 visitors to the booth, were kept very busy.

Leveraging off the presence of the Premier, Minister Mickel and Chief Scientist Professor Peter Andrews, the highly visible QCTN pavilion was a hub for many of the Australians at BIO, and the meeting room located within the QCTN pavilion was well utilised, playing host to many key meetings. QCTN CEO, Mario Pennisi was very pleased to find that with the high profile of the QCTN presence, many of the BIO delegates see clinical trials in Australia, and QCTN as one in the same.

‘Our efforts to have international stakeholders recognise Australia as a destination for undertaking clinical research are now starting to pay real dividends, and were very honoured to host the signing of an MOU between the Fraunhofer Institute and member organisation QIMR’ Mr Pennisi said.

The successes that were realised at BIO were not only great results for clinical development in Australia, but a solid foundation for the lead up to AusBiotech in October. As the event is in Queensland this year, it is important to demonstrate and promote the capacity of Queensland to undertake world class research services, and to position Queensland service providers as the emerging leaders.

Several members of QCTN are striving forward and demonstrating this to the international markets everyday. One such member, University of Queensland-based contract research organisation TetraQ,

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recently achieved Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) certification from the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) for one of its key laboratories. The status means that the company is now recognised to provide internationally accredited testing services to the Australian and international biopharmaceutical industry.

The GLP status means that TetraQ's ADME (absorption, distribution, metabolism and elimination) laboratory's bioanalytical work will be accepted internationally for regulatory review, providing its clients in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries with a high degree of assurance – before long TetraQ will have other sections of its operations accredited.

Qpharm, Australia's leading Phase I service provider, although having a heritage of decades, has recently celebrated five years as a commercial enterprise. This facility is working closely with a leading Japanese university and is already involved in exchanging students. In addition to this, Qpharm has also established a relationship with a US based organisation to provide micro-dosing services – being the first facility in Australia to move towards offering this.

Not only are members advancing, QCTN is also evolving. QCTN has established an independent Institutional Bio-safety Committee (IBC) to assist members and sponsors undertake early clinical research involving genetically modified (GM) products. Late 2007 will also see QCTN operating an independent Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Working both of these committees in tandem will further assist sponsors to undertake clinical research in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

It is proving to be an exciting time for Queensland as we constantly move ahead to become Australia's most desirable location for clinical research and development.

If you would like further information on QCTN or its' members, please contact the office on 07 3331 3999 or visit the website [www.qctn.com.au](http://www.qctn.com.au)

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