

## **New partnership with NZ's Orbis Diagnostics to accelerate health solutions for remote and rural communities**

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The development and delivery of new diagnostic solutions to remote communities in Australia, New Zealand and internationally is the goal of a new strategic partnership between Australian medical research organisation, Burnet Institute, and New Zealand biotech company, Orbis Diagnostics.

The partnership will bring together Burnet's research excellence and Orbis' expertise in the production of lab-quality, point-of-care diagnostics to accelerate the development of a suite of finger-prick blood tests for infectious disease and liver health.

Jennifer Barnes, Director of Burnet Diagnostics Initiative said developing simple, accurate diagnostic tests that can be easily operated in remote and rural areas is essential to improving the health of communities globally.

"A key challenge to delivering health care in rural communities is access. Removing the waiting time for diagnostic test results will be a major step towards helping address this challenge. Our focus has been on the development of lateral flow tests, but the partnership with Orbis Diagnostics will allow us to develop our biomarkers into multiple test formats and reach more communities in need," Ms Barnes said.

"We are pleased to continue our commitment to deliver lab-quality testing to remote and resource-limited communities to improve health security and aid in disease elimination both at home in Australia and globally."

Orbis Chief Executive, Damian Camp said the opportunity to partner with Burnet Institute is a significant step towards applying Orbis' miniaturised, automated pathology lab solution to address the challenges with delivering health care to rural populations.

"We understand access is a major barrier for many people who live in remote locations. Because our diagnostic technology platform is specifically designed to provide quick and accurate information about a persons' health, at point of need, we can help overcome this barrier so that the right healthcare is provided where and when it is needed," he said.

"The partnership will involve developing a suite of diagnostic screening products. The type of tests offered will be based on high need but could span analysing a person's liver function right through to testing for sexually transmitted diseases.

“Through our COVID-19 immunity test, we’ve successfully demonstrated our technology has huge potential to run a number of diagnostic tests at the point of care. We’re aiming to run a real-world pilot of our diagnostic testing solutions in a remote location in the next 12 months.”

With comparable accuracy to the complex tests available in medical labs, each Orbis device is capable of testing up to eight people at a time and reporting results within 15 minutes from a finger-prick sample, making it a robust, cost-effective, scalable, and practical solution to support delivery of rural health services.

Ms Barnes said Burnet Institute brings over 30 years of expertise in translating diagnostic research into practical products that help individuals better manage their health.

“We’re excited to be collaborating with Orbis Diagnostics to translate our research into practical diagnostic solutions for unmet health needs,” she said.

**For further information, please contact:**

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**About Orbis Diagnostics:**

*Orbis Diagnostics is a next-generation point-of-care diagnostics company that is transforming community-based healthcare. Powered by microfluidic and photonic innovations, Orbis’ automated desktop system successfully miniaturises the medical lab to delivering real-time, actionable test results from a finger-prick of blood. Leaders in the primary healthcare sector are working with Orbis to deploy its technology and support time-critical healthcare decision-making at the point of care. The first test available is a quantitative COVID-19 antibody test that measures a person’s individual immune response from vaccination or prior infection. Orbis is developing a comprehensive portfolio of diagnostic solutions that will improve health outcomes by making routine blood testing more convenient and accessible.*

**About Burnet Institute:**

*Burnet Institute is an independent, not-for-profit, medical research institute passionate about social justice, equality and evidence-based research. Our purpose is to create and translate knowledge into better health, so no-one is left behind. The Burnet Diagnostics Initiative was formed to commercialise the Institute’s point-of-care diagnostics research, including a broad range of projects to address syphilis, liver function, HIV and COVID-19.*