

Top brass changes at medical device major iSonea

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Singapore: In a bid to shift its focus from technology development to sales, Australia's top medical device manufacturer iSonea has made changes to its board and executive team.

The company is aiming to bring the sales of its hand-held wheeze monitor for asthma sufferers into the main focus now.

The company's vice-chairman Mr Ross Haghighat will succeed the chairman Mr Stewart Washer, who would be stepping down from the board.

Mr Jerry Korten who was formerly with GE, will take on the role of the chief executive following Mr Michael Thomas' retirement in November.

Acrux director and former Asia Pacific president of pharmaceutical outfit Hospira, Dr Tim Oldham, will also join the board. Mr Haghighat, who runs Boston-based private equity firm Triton Systems, said the changes in the top levels of iSonea were positive.

"We're applying a bit of American-style transitioning. Michael Thomas did a phenomenal job of really taking a high technology concept to a product ready to sell," he said.

The company has developed a device that monitors wheezing in asthmatics, which occurs when airways are constricted. The device keeps a journal in the cloud, which can be downloaded at the next visit to the doctor.

The company sells its devices online in Australia for \$160. The product is approved in Europe, while in the US iSonea's device can be sold with a prescription. The outcome of an application for over-the-counter sales is expected midyear.

Outgoing chairman Dr Washer said he had reached the limit of his most useful skills. "My sweet spot is taking technologies from a good, solid concept to a good product and well on their way to a good, stable business," he said.