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ASIA EDITION

Startup Revolutionary Medical Devices acquired by a Chicago firm Vyaire

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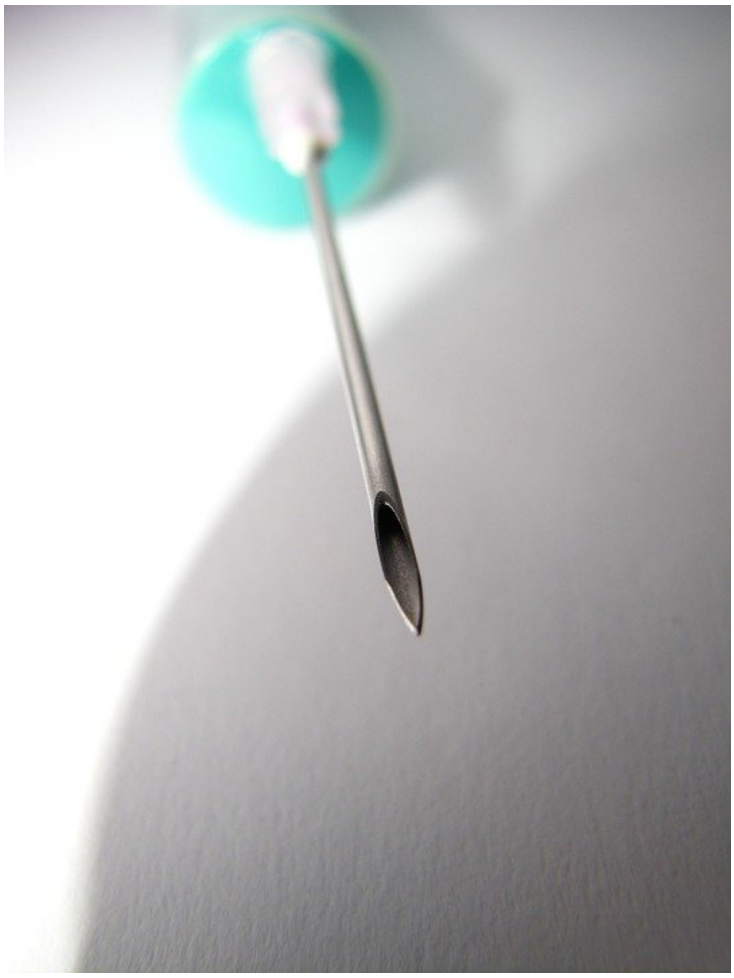

Revolutionary Medical Devices, a little-known Tucson start-up that began marketing a patented nasal ventilating device, has been acquired by a major provider of respiratory products.

According to a report by Tucson.com, terms of the sale to Chicago-based Vyaire Medical Inc., a 2016 spinoff of medical device giant Becton, Dickinson & Co., were not disclosed and the company's future in Tucson is unclear.

Revolutionary Medical Devices was founded in 2013 by co-inventors Dave Kane and Dr. Michael Pedro, Kane's son-in-law and an anesthesiologist in New York who originally came up with the idea.

The company's flagship product, the SuperNO2VA, is a nasal ventilating mask and system designed to keep airways open and provide positive pressure and uninterrupted ventilation for patients under sedation, while allowing access to the mouth for

insertion of tracheal tubes or other oral procedures.

Revolutionary Medical Devices received clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to market the device in October.

The ventilating device greatly reduces the risks of removing a full-face ventilating mask to intubate patients, said Kane, who was president and CEO but left the company upon the acquisition by Vyaire.

“If you’re healthy, it can take 30 seconds, but if you’re not, you’re morbidly obese or elderly, it can take several minutes, and if you’re not breathing for several minutes bad things can happen,” said Kane, an MIT engineering grad whose previous job was running the Tucson office of a defense technology firm.

The company found perhaps an even bigger, secondary market for use on patients who undergo deep-sedation procedures, like gastrointestinal endoscopic procedures, during which patients are typically provided oxygen with nasal tubes called cannula, he said.

Vyaire, formerly known as CareFusion, has been assembling a line of respiratory products through acquisitions.

In April, the company acquired Ciel Medical, a California-based company that developed a medical device to treat ventilator-associated pneumonia.

In a press statement, Vyaire President and CEO Dave Mowry said the SuperNO2VA ventilation system “enables anesthesiologists to provide oxygen to sedated patients in a more controlled and noninvasive way, and is exactly the type of unique and thoughtfully designed product we want to bring to our customers.”

But asked about future plans for the Tucson operation, Vyaire Chief Financial Officer David Stafford declined to comment.

Before co-founding Revolutionary Medical Devices with Pedro, Kane spent more than a decade as an executive in the Tucson office of Areté Associates, a California-based defense contractor with an optical engineering facility here.

Kane said he worked with his son-in-law to develop the nasal ventilator while working his full-time day job before leaving to work full-time on Revolutionary Medical Devices in 2015.

Kane said he helped fund the company initially then brought on individual “angel” investors from New York as well as from Tucson, though with its initial sales effort on the East Coast the company had a low profile here.

The company had 10 employees at the time of the acquisition, including five in Tucson, Kane said.

Revolutionary Medical Devices had started low-rate production and sold some of the SuperNO2VA systems to medical providers in New York under a pilot sales program, Kane said, adding that Tucson Medical Center recently approved the device’s use.

“Our model was to prove the sales model in the New York market, then we got bought out, because they saw how well it was going,” Kane said.