



Drip makers on move

Mobile unit a breakthrough in home health care

By **GREG WENDT**
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A NEW drug infusion device being developed in the Hunter may go global next year.

The developers of the innovative Mobi-Drip say it could revolutionise intravenous therapy, with applications for health care in the home and in military and emergency situations.

A prototype of the lightweight device, which does not need electrical power supply, is being developed at Morisset biotechnology company Keystone Product Developments.

Keystone is a joint venture between Logikal Health Products and University of Newcastle commercial arm TUNRA.

Paul Dastoor from the university's faculty of science and information technology, said the commercial prototype would be ready for clinical assessment in August, and it was possible the Mobi-Drip could be ready for production by early next year.

"The Mobi-Drip ensures a constant flow by maintaining a constant gas pressure around a fluid-containing bag," Dr Dastoor said.

He said the versatility of the

device would enable mobile drug infusion for use by home patients requiring infusions after medical procedures, chemotherapy or other drug therapies.

Because the device worked without power, it also had applications in emergencies or disasters.

The Mobi-Drip used a small cannister of gas to apply pressure to pump the drug at a constant flow rate.

Dr Dastoor said the device was extremely accurate and had the potential to reduce dramatically the costs of home intravenous therapy.

Keystone Product Developments was awarded the biotechnology innovation fund from the Federal Government in 2004 as well as a grant from the NSW Department of State and Regional Development to develop fully the Mobi-Drip prototype this year.

"It's pleasing that almost all the development will be performed in the Hunter, mostly within the physics department of the University of Newcastle, with industrial design aspects contracted to another Hunter company, Neo Design," Dr Dastoor said.