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Israeli med device firm picks Columbus for U.S. HQ

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An overseas medical device firm is using Columbus as a gateway to its next development steps.

Israel-based Sensible Medical Innovations has chosen the city as the site of its U.S. headquarters. Sensible Medical has created a device that monitors chronic diseases such as congestive heart failure externally, which could cut patients' health-care costs and aid early intervention efforts.

Tom Sudow, director of business development for Cleveland's Global Cardiovascular Innovation Center, said Sensible Medical has 16 employees at its overseas headquarters and recently hired one employee to scout a permanent location in Columbus for its U.S. headquarters, potentially the TechColumbus incubator. The innovation center, a public-private partnership tied to the Cleveland Clinic, was the company's first Ohio contact in 2008 and has since awarded Sensible Medical a \$447,000 grant for commercialization of its technology, Sudow said.

Sensible Medical, founded in 2007, says it has successfully tested the device on animals and is preparing for clinical trials on humans. The company will be working on the clinical trial phase with Dr. William Abraham, a professor of internal medicine and director of the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine at Ohio State University Medical Center.

Proximity to Abraham, a renowned authority on congestive heart failure, was a key factor in Sensible Medical's decision to choose Columbus, as well as the caliber of heart hospitals across the state, Sudow said. A recent U.S. News and World Report ranking of the best heart and heart surgery hospitals in the nation put three in the state in its top 50, including Ohio State University Medical Center. The Cleveland Clinic and Christ Hospital in Cincinnati were the other two heart hospitals recognized by the news magazine.

"There's a lot of clinical power here," Sudow said.

The innovation center's grant for Sensible Medical will be awarded through reimbursements of future development expenses, but the company already has multimillion-dollar backing from outside investors. Israel-based venture-capital firms Vitalife and Genesis Partners last year made a \$7 million investment in the company.

Columbus and Franklin County officials along with the ColumbusChamber, BioOhio and some of the region's largest hospital systems also played a part in the company's decision to set up shop in Columbus.