Today’s answers, tomorrow’s breakthroughs

3M Medical Materials and Technologies to play a larger role in bringing the next generation of medical devices to life

**St. Paul, MN – June 1, 2015** – Somewhere in your neighborhood, a chronically ill patient may be enjoying a more active life – freed from daily doctor visits and constant tests. That’s because her critical body functions can now be monitored remotely from a smartphone app, connected to a thin, discrete patch worn on her skin.

Further from home, imagine a small clinic in some remote corner of the world, where laboratory facilities are primitive or non-existent. Using an inexpensive device that reduces a sophisticated diagnostic procedure to the size of a credit card, doctors there can now accurately identify patients who might benefit from treatment with scarce, life-giving drugs.

A new generation of wearable medical devices, miniaturized “lab-on-a-chip” diagnostic tests and other life-enhancing innovations are being made possible, in part, through the use of technologies provided by the newly-relaunched 3M Medical Materials and Technologies group (formerly 3M Medical Specialties).

“Our group was formed back in the 1970s to give medical device manufacturers easier access to 3M technologies, such as medical adhesives, films, materials and more,” says Sheila Nichols, vice president. “Back then, our customers’ supply needs were relatively straightforward. In recent years, however, the health care industry has been increasingly challenged to reduce costs and move care outside of the hospital. Our customers are responding with smaller, feature-rich devices for continuous health monitoring, chronic disease management and more. All of this requires a new level of sophistication in the materials and systems used to make those devices.”

But Nichols points out that, as these devices become more complex, the quality of the materials used in their construction is no longer the only criterion for selecting a supplier.

“Even more important, in my opinion, is determining how these materials will be integrated with other components, and how this will ultimately affect the function of the device,” she says. “That is where collaboration with experts and global technical support is so critical. Our customers have access to a vast pool of 3M technical expertise, which is why I believe they can benefit by getting 3M involved right from the start of their design process.”

Changing customers’ perception of 3M offerings from just an “ingredients” to break-through, designed-in technologies is a key strategic initiative for Nichols’ group in 2015. To mark the shift in emphasis, they will officially adopt their new designation as 3M Medical Materials and Technologies on June 1.
Mike Wiener, global business manager, says this shift reflects the thinking behind 3M’s recently-adopted corporate tagline, “3M Science. Applied to Life.”

“We recognize that your products are ultimately intended to help enhance and save lives, which is the mission we are most proud to be a part of.”

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About 3M

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