

May 25, 2007

Cleveland case study: Going from a tech transfer laggard to the top 10

Cleveland is becoming a hotbed of successful research commercialization, and tech transfer professionals are getting the lion's share of the credit. CCF Innovations, the Cleveland Clinic's tech transfer arm, and the joint tech transfer program for Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals, reported statistics that most technology managers would drool over. In the first four months of 2007, the Cleveland Clinic already has seen a 48% increase in the number of inventions its doctors are disclosing to the hospital system. As of April 30, Clinic physicians had submitted plans for 105 inventions, up from 71 in the first four months of 2006. Case Western and its hospital system expect to have about 135 inventions in the fiscal year that ends June 30. That's a major change from the years before the Case/UH tech transfer office was established in 2002, when many faculty members kept quiet about their research findings, ideas and inventions, often just publishing them in professional journals or using them in the classroom. Now Case and UH average one invention for every \$2.5 million in research money spent, right in line with national benchmarks. What's more, the AUTM has ranked Case among the top 10 nationwide for the number of university-based startup companies, gross licensing income, the number of inventions disclosed and the total number of licenses in 2005, the latest year for which information is available. Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals as a whole have made significant strides in the amount of licensing revenues they've obtained each year, reaching \$18 million in the fiscal year that ended last June 30, up from \$3 million in the fiscal 2002.