

Pathfinder Therapeutics Inc., a medical device firm based in Nashville, Tennessee, gave a well-received presentation at MedTech Insight's "Investment In Innovation (In3) WEST : *A Preview of Early-Stage Medical Technology Companies*" Conference, which took place in February, 2006 Irvine, California.

Paul MacDonald discussed the company's emergence as the leader in developing image-guided surgery (IGS) systems for soft tissue organs, with an initial focus on the liver. "Image guided surgery has become the standard of care for neurosurgical applications," says MacDonald. "The Pathfinder image-guided liver surgery system will be the first to bring that same degree of accuracy to a soft tissue organ."

Currently, the most efficacious therapy for treating liver tumors is open liver resection. Prior to this procedure, x-ray images of a patient's liver are acquired for surgical planning. Unfortunately, surgeons cannot use these preoperative images interactively *during* surgery, when it is most critical for a surgeon to know precisely where an incision should be made.

Pathfinder's solution is a patented global-positioning surgical system that allows a surgeon to view and manipulate images of the diseased organ during the actual operation. This system, the first fully complete surgical platform for liver therapy, is the product of nine years of research and development in the field of liver surgical guidance at Vanderbilt University, which features one of the world's leading IGS laboratories.

Pathfinder is already first in human with this technology, with a working prototype of the system currently being used in preliminary clinical investigations at Washington University in St. Louis, and additional clinical studies planned at other hospitals. With the success of its liver application, Pathfinder will look to develop other soft tissue image-guided surgical products, including a module for the kidney.

In the fall of 2004, Pathfinder received a seed round investment to develop a clinical prototype image-guided liver surgery system for use in Phase II clinical trials. Pathfinder was also awarded a \$1.10MM SBIR grant to develop an FDA-approved image-guided therapy software platform.