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MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES

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Bioengineering - bet on innovation -

On 10th January took place the TV program entitled "Bioengineering" on Channel Taronja Central, in Manresa. Reference leaders on the public and private sector, from research centers, universities, medical centers and companies, all of them connected directly with the *Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic*, assisted to the program.

The round table was chaired by Dr. Jose Manuel Prado, General Manager of the *Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic* and composed by Dr. Joan Bosc, Director of Quality, Innovation and Teaching at *Fundació Althaia*, Dr. Lourdes Camp, General Manager of Ventura Medical Technologies, Dr. David Barquet, General Manager of Technobionics Medical Devices, Dr. Jesús Montesinos, Head of Innovation at *Fundació Althaia*, Dr. Xavier Gil, Director of Biomaterials, Biomechanics and Tissue Engineering group of the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*, Dr. Sebastian Idelsohn, Head of Bioengineering Area at *Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic*, and Dr. Albert Mangas, responsible of the Innovation Department and Business Development at Avinent Implant System.

The gathering was centered on the topic of bioengineering, which as said Dr. Jose Manuel Prado, it is a relatively new science that applies the scientific and engineering knowledge to medicine.

This idea opened a debate among the attendees who remarked that Catalonia has a long tradition of research in the field of biosciences and high level centers in biomedical engineering, such as universities, biotechnology companies, pharmaceutical (representing 60 % of the country), technology centers and parks and a large hospital network. In addition, it was noted that the *Generalitat de Catalunya* promotes grant programs to encourage companies to invest in bioengineering and convert basic research into commercial reality, and also it promotes initiatives such as the biomedical cluster or organizations as BioCat, in what is known as Bioregion.

All participants agreed that betting on innovation makes us competitive in a constantly changing environment, to invest in the field of bioengineering is initially not easy, as it involves a long period of development until the product reaches to the market, but the failure to do so carries a greater risk, especially in an environment of economic crisis in which we are immersed.

They also stressed the importance of having a good internationalization strategy to access with the maximum competitive conditions in a global market. ACCIÓ (innovation and internationalization support agency of Catalan companies) has played and plays a vital role in the diversification and internationalization of Catalan companies in this field and it has recently launched the Health Technology Cluster to promote collaboration and cooperation among public and private institutions, enterprises and entrepreneurs in this sector.

The day concluded by proposing a paradigm shift at the level of healthcare institutions by promoting a space for innovation for healthcare professionals, connecting with technology centers such as *Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic*, with universities as FUB (*Fundació Universitària del Bages*) or the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya* and companies as attendees at this round table.

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