

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **SMERUD Medical Research CRO Group: Significant Investment in Manchester**

### **New Employees and New Offices To Meet Increasing Service Demand**

Manchester, UK (24<sup>th</sup> January 2012)

Smerud Medical Research International AS ([www.smerud.com](http://www.smerud.com)), a Norwegian Headquartered full service, clinical contract research organisation (CRO) has made a significant investment in its Manchester (UK) office by trebling its employee headcount and facilities for 2012.

SMERUD have increased their Manchester based employees from 3 to 9 full time professionals. The recent additions bring with them a wealth of experience in drug development, with specialisms in clinical development planning, regulatory affairs, intellectual property management, biostatistics and quality assurance. In conjunction with the talented clinical team already in place, this expansion underpins SMERUD's commitment of supporting the needs of its existing clients in the local biotech sector and the UK life science industry.

SMERUD have also signed a 10 year lease on a newly refitted 3,500 sqft office suite occupying the top floor of Trafford House, overlooking Manchester United's Football Ground. This is an 3 fold increase in space from the company's previous Manchester office based at the Manchester Science Park and reflects the company's continued success and ambition for future growth.

Knut Smerud, SMERUD's founder and CEO, commented: 'We are very proud to be expanding our UK headquarters in Manchester. This expansion is part of our long term strategy to grow within the key UK marketplace and extend our service capabilities to meet the existing and future demands of the biotech sector within both the UK and EU. Being Scandinavian in origin, we have always felt a common culture with Britain in general and the North-West in particular. For more than 15 years we have conducted Anglo-Nordic collaborative clinical trials with great success and always with friendly and very competent partners in the UK. On a personal note, our new location is also a childhood's dream come true – I have been a keen supporter of Manchester United since the mid 70's, and now finally being settled with an office literally overlooking Old Trafford is very motivating. We hope to make our Manchester base our own 'Theatre of Dreams'.

Tim Newns, Chief Executive of MIDAS, Manchester's inward investment agency which works on behalf of the region to secure new business from overseas investors, commented: 'It's great news that SMERUD, an innovative multinational research company, has chosen Manchester to expand its UK operation. SMERUD is a partner to a host of biotech companies and we're delighted that they recognise the scale of Greater Manchester's biomedical sector, and the potential business opportunities that it offers. MIDAS has worked with SMERUD for several years and will continue working closely to support their growth plans for the future.'

### **About SMERUD CRO:**

The Smerud Medical Research Group (SMERUD) is a European clinical Contract Research Organisation (CRO) with offices in the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Austria, Hungary, Poland and Russia. Operating since 1993, SMERUD was the first privately owned CRO to establish themselves in all Nordic countries and currently employs

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<b>Address:</b> Suite 11, Trafford House Chester Road, Manchester M32 0RS U.K.	<b>Phone:</b> (+44) 161 870 8127	<b>E-mail:</b> kerry.nield@smerud.com	<b>Web site:</b> www.smerud.com	<b>Enterprise No.:</b> 05844549
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approximately 80 specialists engaged in clinical research, regulatory affairs, data management, biostatistics, quality assurance, intellectual property and medical writing activities. The company can supply all operational services needed to develop a drug from first-in-man until marketing authorisation, with core competences in clinical project management and phase I–III monitoring in multiple therapeutic areas (involved in more than 800 clinical trials since inception). In the last 4 years, SMERUD has demonstrated commitment to Research & Development (R&D) by opening an internal research department, and financing industry-academia partnership PhDs. This commitment and contribution to internally financed R&D makes SMERUD an atypical CRO. Specifically, SMERUD are unique in our considerable experience working in collaboration with SMEs to gain European funding for proof-of-concept clinical trials; we were the first company to obtain clinical trial funding under the ‘Eurostars’ European Innovation programme and have an outstanding track record in assisting our partners to access this non-dilutive funding source. As a relatively small company, SMERUD is ideally sized and experienced to be a preferred partner for biotech and biopharmaceutical companies in terms of managing clinical trials in a cost-effective setting.

**For Further Information please contact:**

Kerry Nield

Business Development Manager

Smerud Medical Research International

Tel.: 0161 870 8127 or 07949 534 747

E-mail: [kerry.nield@smerud.com](mailto:kerry.nield@smerud.com)

Web: [www.smerud.com](http://www.smerud.com)