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Nearly a hundred new high tech jobs are to be created at the Liverpool manufacturing site of Seqirus, one of the world's largest influenza vaccine companies, as a result of major new investment.

The Liverpool site manufactures bulk material for a range of influenza vaccines, including an adjuvanted influenza vaccine designed for people aged 65 years and above. The bulk material is currently shipped to Italy where it is filled into vials and syringes by a contract manufacturer.

Seqirus has taken the decision to bring this capability in-house, choosing to invest in a new and expanded fill-and-finish facility on the Liverpool site. The investment will help meet growing demand for its adjuvanted influenza vaccine, strengthen reliability of supply and bolster pandemic response.

Seqirus already contributes over £1 billion to the UK economy each year. The new 'fill-and-finish' facility will help drive economic growth by creating 88 new high value jobs at the Liverpool site, adding to the 600 already employed there, supporting supplier partnerships and increasing exports.

Seqirus' adjuvanted influenza vaccine is specifically designed to enhance the immune response in older adults, offering greater protection compared to conventional influenza vaccines.[1],[2],[3] The product is licensed in major global markets and was recently approved in the UK for supply in the 2018/19 influenza season. It is the only licensed seasonal influenza vaccine of its kind in the world.

Gordon Naylor, President of Seqirus, said: "Our Liverpool site, the largest influenza vaccine manufacturing facility in the UK, and one of the largest in Europe, is well-placed to supply the UK with an enhanced influenza vaccine for people aged 65 years plus. It will also be an export success story, primed to supply this vaccine to countries where it is already licensed in Europe and North America, and to countries in Latin America and Australasia where regulatory submissions are ongoing. This investment is a sign of Seqirus' continued commitment to public health and to the Liverpool region as a leading biotechnology hub."

The £40m project takes the company's investment in the site to over £60m since CSL acquired the Novartis influenza vaccine business in July 2015 to create Seqirus.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said: "Through the Industrial Strategy, the Government is building on our world-leading strengths in research and innovation, and quickening the pace of scientific discovery – backed by £4.7 billion, the largest increase in investment in R&D for 40 years. The new highly skilled manufacturing roles Seqirus is creating here in Merseyside will help develop pioneering vaccines to tackle the global problem of influenza. This investment, achieved by the board, Government and local leaders working together, is a huge vote of confidence our thriving biotechnology sector."

In addition to its role in the supply of seasonal influenza vaccine, Seqirus is a global leader in pandemic preparedness and response. The company is contracted by the UK Government to be in constant a state of readiness for the production of pandemic influenza vaccine during a pandemic emergency.

Dr Laura O'Brien, Vice President of Operations and Site Head at Liverpool, said: "Speed is of the essence in a pandemic situation. This investment means we can complete production of more pandemic vaccine much more rapidly, saving vital days in getting vaccines out to protect the British population as well as to other countries in the region."

The new fill and finish facility at the Seqirus Liverpool site will be fully operational in 2019.

Notes to Editors:

Seqirus is part of CSL Limited (ASX:CSL), headquartered in Melbourne, Australia. The CSL Group of companies employs more than 20,000 people with operations in more than 60 countries.

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Seqirus was established on 31st July 2015 following CSL's acquisition of the Novartis influenza vaccines business and its subsequent integration with bioCSL. As the 2nd-largest influenza vaccine provider in the world, Seqirus is a major contributor to the prevention of influenza globally and a transcontinental partner in pandemic preparedness.

Seqirus operates state-of-the-art production facilities in the US, the UK, and Australia, and manufactures influenza vaccines using both egg-based and cell-based technologies. It has leading R&D capabilities, a broad portfolio of differentiated products, and a commercial presence in more than 20 countries.

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