

Sharp announces £9.5m expansion that will double staff numbers creating more than 70 jobs with Welsh Government support

Sharp Clinical Services (UK) Ltd, which provides global clinical trial services, is relocating from its current facilities in Crickhowell which are at full capacity and investing in the upgrading and fit-out of much larger premises in Rhymney.

The investment is backed by £500,000 business finance from the Welsh Government which ensured the expansion went ahead in Wales as another location in the Midlands was under consideration.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“This is a significant expansion project for the life sciences sector in Wales and will effectively embed a large international healthcare plc in Wales, boosting our growing reputation as a key location for pharma service companies.

“I am delighted Welsh Government support helped secure this major investment for Wales that will create a range of skilled employment opportunities for local people and also bring a disused industrial building back into economic use.”

Sharp UK's base in Crickhowell is the European hub of the Group's clinical services division and provides global clinical trial services including supplies, drug formulation, manufacturing, packaging, distribution and commercial packaging.

It is currently located in two separate buildings on Elvicta Business Park providing 45,000 sq. ft. of accommodation which is at full capacity with no room to expand and take on new business.

The expansion will enable the company to compete for major clinical and commercial packaging contracts with large pharmaceutical companies. The initial phase of the project will involve the acquisition and renovation of a 75,000 sq ft facility – part of a 108,000 sq ft space within a ten acre site providing space for future expansion and potentially further jobs.

Wales' Skills and Science Minister, Julie James said:

“Over the last few years the Welsh Government has invested millions in supporting Life Sciences in Wales and as one of our key priority

sectors we are keen to see this important area grow even more.

“In Wales, the sector currently employs around 11,000 people in over 360 companies and its worth circa £2bn to the Welsh economy and we are committed to enhancing this further and building Wales’ STEM skills capabilities and capacity.

“This expansion is welcome news for the sector, the local community and the wider Welsh economy and shows how Wales’ healthcare and biotech industries are going from strength to strength.”

Frank Lis, President of Sharp Clinical Services, said about the development,

“We have always felt that a critical part of the services we offer is the expertise of our teams. This new facility will allow us to grow both the Sharp team in Wales to support current business and to expand our clinical services portfolio to new customers, at a larger scale”.

Sharp Clinical Services (UK) Ltd is part of the Sharp Packaging Services division of UDG Healthcare plc, a leading international provider of clinical, commercial, communications and packaging services to the health care industry. It employs more than 7000 people at operations across 23 countries and delivers services to more than 50 countries.