

UK's OptiBiotix Health partners with Zeon Lifesciences

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British company Optibiotix signed an exclusive manufacturing and supply agreement with Indian Healthcare company Zeon for the use of OptiBiotix's science-based weight management technology, SlimBiome. This partnership was facilitated by the Department for International Trade, and the Rt. Hon Mark Field Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office was present at the official signing ceremony was held at St Regis in Mumbai on 2nd March.

The Rt Hon Mark Field MP, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at FCO acknowledged this positive example of UK-India collaboration in the field of Lifesciences, saying, "I am delighted to be here and fascinated to hear about the work of OptiBiotix Health PLC & Zeon Lifesciences Ltd. This collaboration between OptiBiotix and Zeon is a really exciting start. We hope it will pave the way for real advances in the way to prevent and manage chronic lifestyle ailments like diabetes and obesity."

OptiBiotix's CEO, Stephen O'Hara, highlighted the untapped opportunities in India which are available to UK companies, "Our rapid expansion into India through this partnership with Zeon demonstrates the kinds of opportunities that are available to UK industry here. We believe that our partnership with Zeon is an important step in facilitating the needs of existing and new corporate partners in India and Southern Asia and anticipate further announcements in due course."

Many parts of India have faced cases of malnutrition and this fast-developing economy is now also battling rising obesity. Access to unhealthy and processed foods has grown following India's increased integration into global food markets. Rising middle class incomes have also contributed to increasing the average caloric intake per individual among the middle class and above income households.

According to the National Family Health Survey, the number of obese people in India has doubled over the past ten years. In addition, India reported 72 million cases of diabetes in 2017, and an estimated 122,700 men aged 30 and above die from diabetes in India every year.

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Following the confirmation of the deal, Zeon now has a license to manufacture and supply SlimBiome across India in return for a 50% profit share.

SlimBiome, which was granted CE mark approval as a medical device in 2018, actively helps people to consistently manage their weight loss by reducing their food intake while at the same time reducing food cravings. Independent clinical studies at a number of universities have shown that, when compared to a control group, people who took SlimBiome:

- Feel fuller and are less hungry.
- Experience fewer food cravings.
- Change their food choice to eat less sweet and fatty foods.

OptiBiotix was formed in March 2012 by Stephen O'Hara to develop compounds which modify the human microbiome – the collective genome of the microbes in the body – to prevent and manage human disease.

The aim of OptiBiotix is to discover and develop microbial strains, compounds and formulations, which modulate the human microbiome and can be used as food ingredients and supplements or active compounds for the prevention and management of human metabolic diseases, examples of which include obesity, cholesterol and lipid distribution and diabetes.

OptiBiotix has established a pipeline of microbiome modulators that can impact on lipid and cholesterol management, energy harvest and appetite suppression. The development pipeline is fuelled by its proprietary OptiScreen® and OptiBiotic® platform technologies designed to identify metabolic pathways and compounds that impact on human physiology and bring potential health benefits. These platforms are applicable across a wider range of other human diseases.