



**Press Release**

**18 September 2009**

**Gamma Vaccines Pty Ltd develops universal flu vaccine able to protect against a diverse range of influenza viruses including swine and bird flu**

A new entrant into the vaccine development industry has emerged with the creation of Gamma Vaccines Pty Ltd – an Australian vaccine company whose first product, GammaFlu™, affords broad protective immunity against a wide diversity of influenza virus A strains<sup>1</sup>.

The recent experience of swine flu, and the continuing fears of the medical, scientific and world health community of the sudden emergence of a deadly bird flu strain means that a new approach to flu vaccines needs to be contemplated that provides some protection against all influenza virus A strains, including any emergent pandemic virus.

*“One of the great challenges in vaccinating individuals against influenza is that new strains can suddenly emerge, rendering currently available vaccines ineffective,”* said Gamma Vaccines founding scientist Professor Arno Müllbacher, the Head of the Viral Immunology Group at The Australian National University.

Dr Mohammed Alsharifi, the co-founder of Gamma Vaccines said that *“our key discovery was finding a method of isolating and killing the influenza virus that preserves the proper structure of the virus and its various proteins. This was achieved by using gamma irradiation – a procedure widely used to sterilize surgical instruments and stop the spoilage of perishable fruits.*

Professor Tim Hirst, Executive Chairman of Gamma Vaccines commented *“This new approach to influenza vaccines provides for the development of a broad-based, highly cross-protective flu vaccine that can be stored or stocked-piled and then used immediately on the emergence of a new pandemic flu strain.*

For further information about Gamma Vaccines, please contact:

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<sup>1</sup>Alsharifi et al (2009) Intranasal Flu Vaccine Protective Against Seasonal and H5N1 Avian Influenza Infections. PLoS 4 (4), e5336. [www.plosone.org](http://www.plosone.org)