

### **Expansion of capacity for polysulfone hollow-fiber dialyzer membrane**

Asahi Kasei Kuraray Medical will expand capacity for polysulfone hollow-fiber membrane for use in APS™ dialyzers at the membrane spinning facility of its dialyzer plant in Okatomi, Nobeoka, Miyazaki. The expansion will raise its polysulfone hollow-fiber membrane spinning capacity to 34 million modules-equivalent/year upon start-up in October 2009.

#### *Essentials of the capacity expansion*

Location: Integrated spinning and assembly plant under construction in Okatomi, Nobeoka, Miyazaki, Japan.

Capacity: 6 million modules-equivalent/year polysulfone membrane for dry-pack dialyzers

Investment: ≈¥2.8 billion

Groundbreaking: August 2008

Start-up: October 2009

Medical devices operations are marked as a focus for growth in the Asahi Kasei Group's *Growth Action – 2010* strategic management initiative. Asahi Kasei Kuraray Medical has made a number of investments to expand business in the field of dialyzers, also called artificial kidneys. In May 2008 it completed a new spinning plant for ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer (EVOH) hollow-fiber membrane, and it is currently constructing a new plant for polysulfone-membrane dialyzers with integrated spinning and assembly lines with start-up scheduled in October 2008.

The capacity expansion announced today will further advance Asahi Kasei Kuraray Medical's global dialyzer operations based on world-leading quality and cost-competitiveness in polysulfone hollow-fiber membranes, and enable an extension of operations to include the supply of hollow fiber to manufacturers performing dialyzer assembly both in Japan and overseas.

The market for dialyzers is growing steadily in Japan and throughout the world, as the number of hemodialysis patients increases and facilities for hemodialysis therapy become increasingly available. Demand growth is particularly strong for polysulfone-membrane dialyzers, due to their exceptional performance and biocompatibility.

As a leading dialyzer manufacturer, Asahi Kasei Kuraray Medical is dedicated to contributing to the advancement of hemodialysis therapy through the ongoing development of superior products and production technologies, while meeting rising worldwide demand with timely expansions of production capacity. Throughout this effort, the focus remains the provision of hemodialysis systems that meet the various needs of medical institutions to provide greater quality of life to the patient.

*Profile of Asahi Kasei Kuraray Medical Co., Ltd.*

President: Yasuyuki Yoshida

Establishment: July 1974

Paid-in capital: ¥800 million

Shareholding: 93% by Asahi Kasei Pharma, 7% by Kuraray Medical

Head office: Tokyo, Japan

Business line:

Development, production, and sale of dialyzers and therapeutic apheresis products

Production facilities:

Nobeoka – production of hollow-fiber dialyzer membrane and other products

Oita – assembly of dialyzers and blood filters

China – assembly of dialyzers

Employees: ≈1,500 (at end of March 2008)