IRIDEX Granted U.S. Patent for Stepped Angled Laser Handpieces Used in Eye Surgery

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif., May 2, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- IRIDEX Corporation (Nasdaq: IRIX [1]) today announced that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office had issued to IRIDEX a patent applying to a group of specially designed laser handpieces used in invasive ophthalmic surgical procedures. The patent, No. 7,909,816 and titled "Directional Probe Treatment Apparatus," applies to a number of consumable medical devices already in the IRIDEX product line collectively known as Stepped Angled EndoProbe® laser handpieces.

"This is an important patent for us because our Stepped Angled probes are the best selling product line within our consumable product portfolio," said IRIDEX President and CEO Theodore A. Boutacoff. "Users of these handpieces consistently comment on their performance, ease of use and their longer working distance compared to competitive probes. This patent helps us further differentiate our products from our competitors and creates new barriers for competition."

"Furthermore, we intend to expand our Stepped Angled EndoProbe product line by introducing additional versions," Boutacoff added. "This is another example of us executing on our ongoing goal of increasing the number of consumable devices we offer and to further grow our revenue in that high-margin category."

Stepped Angled EndoProbe handpieces are used in invasive ophthalmic surgical procedures. A portion of the outside diameter in these devices is both reduced in diameter and formed into an arc. The incorporation of both of these features in a single device gives ophthalmologists the clinical benefits of a curved laser probe while maintaining compatibility with the straight cannulas used with today's small-gauge vitrectomy instruments.

The patented Stepped Angled EndoProbe handpiece design offers some unique advantages over alternative angled probes. The handpieces are very durable and rea
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