

Industry rejects claims of lack of innovation and investment in catheters

4 June 2015. The trade association representing the manufacturers of urology products including catheters has rejected claims by a researcher of a lack of innovation and investment in catheters, describing the assertions “incorrect.”

The Urology Trade Association has responded to claims made by Professor Mandy Fader in a BBC feature on catheters. Professor Fader has suggested that the design of catheters has barely changed in more than 80 years, and accused manufacturers of failing to improve designs, also suggesting they have little incentive to invest in products.

The Association has argued that Professor Fader’s assertions ignore continued investment by manufacturers, along with innovation to minimise the risks of infection and improve the quality of intermittent catheters and people's quality of life. The Association has also expressed concern that Professor Fader’s claims might pre-judge research she is leading at the University of Southampton to assess the utility of single-use catheters, currently the standard products for patients, and catheters that can be washed and reused.

Chris Whitehouse, Chairman of the Urology Trade Association, said:

“Professor Fader’s claims ignore substantial and continued innovation and investment in catheter products by industry, particularly over the last 20 years. Manufacturers continually talk with patients and healthcare professionals, and the development of catheters is led by what patients want and need.

“The simple fact is that it is now possible to get catheters that are easier to use than ever before. Some are designed to look like consumer products to make them more discrete for Professor Fader to then claim that innovation and investment isn’t taking place is quite clearly incorrect. These claims are particularly concerning given that she is undertaking research into catheters that could affect what products patients have access to in the future.”

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