Hanger and Polhemus Team to Develop 3D Laser-Scanning Technology for Prosthetic and Orthotic Applications

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BETHESDA, Md., May 16 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc. (NYSE: HGR) has teamed with Polhemus, the leading producer of three dimensional motion tracking systems, to develop a laser scanning system for prosthetic and orthotic applications. A faster, cleaner and less invasive alternative to traditional casting methods, the new system could revolutionize the process of fitting a patient for a prosthetic or orthotic device.

"We are very excited about working with Polhemus on this important development. This innovative technology has the potential to dramatically improve the quality of the entire patient treatment experience," Hanger Chairman and CEO Ivan R. Sabel said. "Our practitioners who have participated in the development and testing of this system are impressed with the speed, accuracy and, as a consequence, their ability to spend more of their time focused on their patients and the clinical aspects of their responsibilities."

The three-dimensional motion-tracking laser scanner, developed by Polhemus and Applied Research Associates in New Zealand exclusively for use by Hanger practitioners, incorporates the same patented technology used by United States Armed Services, which enables image capture to occur in a rapid and accurate fashion for all patients in a variety of settings. Hanger is currently testing the scanner for various prosthetic and orthotic applications, including, but not limited to: prosthetic sockets, cranial helmets, spinal jackets, and custom orthotic braces.

"It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that we are able to combine the leading technologies of three-dimensional motion tracking and digitizing with the clinical excellence of Hanger, the industry leader in orthotics and prosthetics," said Al Rodgers, President and CEO of Polhemus. "This teaming is geared to produce new and innovative procedures that look to increase practitioner effectiveness and patient comfort for years to come."

The compact, portable laser scanner works by casting a fan of laser light over the person's limb, head, or body, while the camera on the wand views the laser to record a cross-sectional profile of the object. The embedded motion- tracking device determines the position and orientation of the scanner's wand, enabling the computer to reconstruct the full three-dimensional surface of the object within Hanger's proprietary CAD/CAM software. Moving objects, such as a baby's head or a person's residual limb, can be scanned with accuracy by attaching a small second receiver to the object in motion.

Hanger plans to launch the roll out of the laser scanner system to all of its patient care centers beginning in July 2003.

About Polhemus -- Polhemus, located in Colchester, Vermont, is a global leader in providing three-dimensional position tracking systems. Polhemus supplies a complete range of these high quality 3D motion tracking and digitizing systems for various industries including medical, military training and simulation, computer-aided design and virtual reality. For more information on Polhemus, please visit www.polhemus.com.

About Hanger -- Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics, a division of Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc (NYSE: HGR), owns and operates some 600 orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) patient care centers nationwide. Staffed by nearly 900 certified practitioners, Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics provides patients with convenient, consistent, high quality care. For more information, please call 1-877-4HANGER or visit www.hanger.com.

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