

## Cash boost for York skin cancer project



**SKIN DEEP:** The Neotherix team, from left, Dr Peter Iddon, development manager, Dr Mike Raxworthy, chief executive and Dr Lorenzo Pio Serino, biomaterials scientist

by **RON GODFREY**

Business editor

A YORK-BASED medical project to help skin cancer patients has been given a huge cash boost.

Neotherix, based at the Research Centre at York Science Park, developed a method for regenerating tissue of patients operated on.

It has received half funding for the £345,000 project.

Neotherix has been refining EktoTherix, a dressing used to heal surgical wounds after skin cancer operations, with the help of Lorien Engineering Solutions, of the Midlands, and York-based Smith & Nephew Advanced Wound Management.

Now Matrix Knowledge Group has joined the trio to evaluate the economics of putting the invention into clinical practice.

The Technology Strategy Board is funding half the estimated cost of taking the therapy to its next stage of development.

A massive market awaits the consortium, estimated at £360 million per year.

A patch of EktoTherix applied to the post-operative wound acts as "scaffolding" for the fissure to be closed by the patient's own skin cells, avoiding the need for grafting skin tissue from elsewhere on the patient and cutting down on healing time.

Iain Gray, the Technology Strategy Board's chief executive, said: "Regenerative medicine has already provided significant medical advances in areas such as skin regeneration for burns patients, and it has the potential to offer cures and treatments with long-term benefits.

"The UK is a world leader in this area, with a strong science base. For us to fulfil our potential in this field, a number of development challenges need to be overcome, so that British business – and the wider economy – can benefit from the successful commercial exploitation of promising