

## Mediaportal Report

20/08/2008

▶ **Robot just like having a doctor in the house**

The Dominion Post, 20/08/08, General News, Page 6  
By: Rebecca Palmer

KIWI scientists are developing **robots** that could be used to measure blood pressure, help patients who fall over, carry out ward rounds and keep older folk company. A new **robotics** laboratory was opened in **Auckland** yesterday as a joint venture of **Auckland University** and Korean scientists.

**Keywords:** Auckland(4), care(1), devices(1), elderly(2), Research(3), researchers(2), robot(6), robotic(1), robotics(3), robots(4), University(2)

Clip Ref: **00040221898**

306 words  
Type: News Item  
Photo: Yes

▶ **Robots coming to a hospital near you**

Timaru Herald, 20/08/08, General News, Page 2  
By: None

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Clip Ref: **00040229721**

220 words  
Type: News Item  
Photo: No

▶ **Robots built to help elderly**

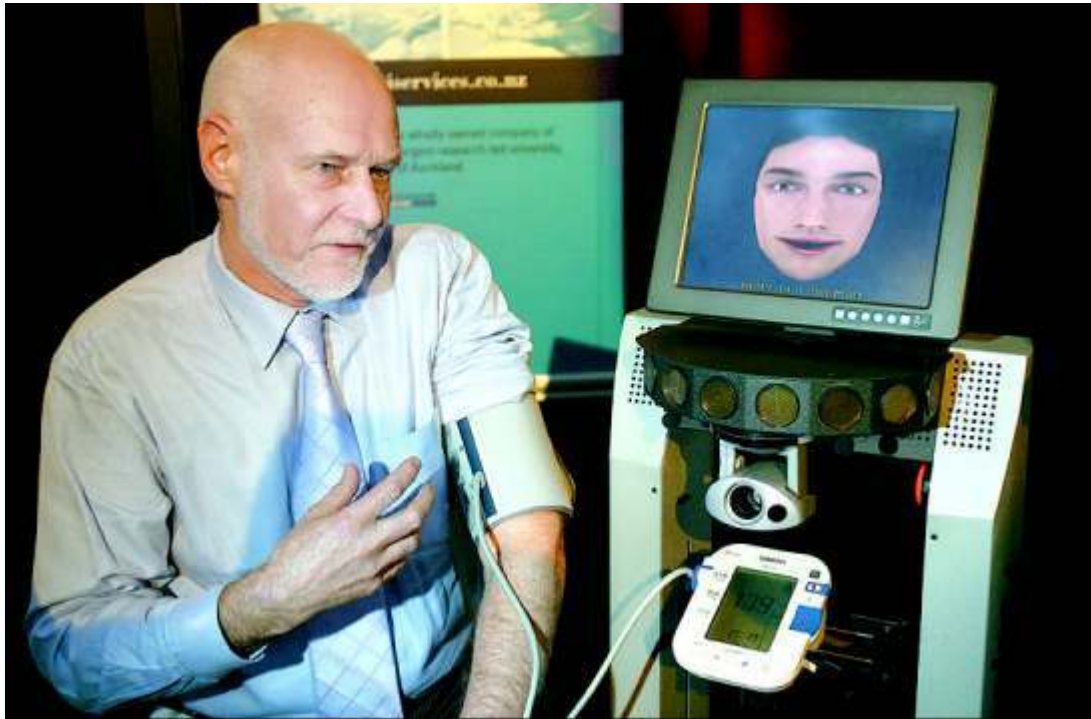
Press, The, 20/08/08, General News, Page 9  
By: DP

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Clip Ref: **00040222821**

278 words  
Type: News Item  
Photo: No



**Exciting advance:** A robot takes Pete Hodgson's blood pressure at yesterday's opening of the robotics laboratory in Auckland. Picture: JOHN SELKIRK

# Robot just like having a doctor in the house

**REBECCA PALMER**

KIWI scientists are developing robots that could be used to measure blood pressure, help patients who fall over, carry out ward rounds — and keep older folk company.

A new robotics laboratory was opened in Auckland yesterday as a joint venture of Auckland University and Korean scientists.

Research, Science and Technology Minister Pete Hodgson had his blood pressure taken by a robot and said it was “an exciting new era”.

Kiwi researchers will adapt robot technology already developed by their Korean counterparts and “Westernise” it, including making robots

speak and recognise English. “We need them to be interactive with speech,” Auckland University senior lecturer in robotics Bruce MacDonald said.

The researchers also needed to establish whether there was a preference for robots of a particular sex or age and would carry out investigations to establish this.

Dr MacDonald said robot users in the West might have different expectations from those in Korea: “It’s also about making the way they behave to be suitable for a Western environment. It’s not just language, it’s also what they say and how they say it.”

The laboratory will use existing technology developed by

Korea’s Electronics and Telecommunications Research Unit and customise it, allowing robots to take over more menial, repetitive tasks done by healthcare workers.

Dr MacDonald said the New Zealanders would focus on developing a robot “platform” for Kiwi companies, so they could get into export markets for care of the elderly.

Different prototypes would be tried out with elderly people and the first robotic devices were expected to be available in three years.

The Foundation for Research, Science and Technology has committed \$1.8 million to the project over three years and Korea will provide \$3.7 million to the unit.



**Timaru Herald**  
**20/08/2008**  
**Page: 2**  
**General News**  
**Region: Timaru Canterbury**  
**Circulation: 14329**  
**Type: Provincial**  
**Size: 104.12 sq.cms**  
**MTWTFS-**

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## NEW WORLD

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