A consortium of significant UK industrial, technology and engineering businesses from across the aerospace, automotive and medical sectors, has come together to produce medical ventilators for the UK.

The VentilatorChallengeUK Consortium (“the consortium”) is led by Dick Elsy, CEO of High Value Manufacturing Catapult, a group of manufacturing research centres in the UK.

Over the past week the consortium has been working hard to investigate production of a range of ventilator design options to meet a high-level specification for a Rapidly Manufactured Ventilator System (“RMVS”) developed by clinicians and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (“MHRA”).

The consortium has evaluated all requirements to design, manufacture, assemble and test components, as well as finished medical ventilators.

Companies in the consortium have now received formal orders from the Government in excess of 10,000 units.

The consortium will now accelerate production of an agreed new design, based on existing technologies, which can be assembled from materials and parts in current production. The device combines existing proven clinical equipment and is the clinicians’ first choice for the RMVS.

The regulator has been involved throughout and we anticipate a straightforward and very prompt regulatory sign off after the final audit.

The consortium is now working at full speed to take the necessary steps in order to increase production of this design. Production will begin this week.

The consortium also includes another producer of medical ventilators and it will provide them with additional manufacturing support and assembly facilities in order to scale up production of a second existing ventilator design which has full regulatory approval.

In response to the NHS’ requirements to treat coronavirus patients, there are a range of other projects aiming to increase ventilator production.

The VentilatorChallengeUK consortium is committed to playing its role in delivering both medical ventilator designs to the required specifications and, in conjunction with these other companies, organisations and groups, aid the delivery of additional ventilators to the NHS. The companies involved have taken many of their people from key company projects to do this and serve the national need.

Dick Elsy, the High Value Manufacturing Catapult’s chief executive, said:

“This consortium brings together some of the most innovative companies in the world. Every day, their highly-skilled staff collaborate to create solutions that help millions of people, and this project is no different. They are working together with incredible determination and energy to scale up production of much-needed ventilators and combat a virus that is affecting people in many countries. I am confident this consortium has the skills and tools to make a difference and save lives.”