

Novartis partners with De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute to establish Center of Excellence for Clinical Trials

Jul 24, 2020

- Novartis Healthcare Philippines and De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute (DLSMHSI) have signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to establish a Center of Excellence for Clinical Trials that will focus on research and development of innovative medicines and vaccines.
- The MOA marks the first time Novartis has partnered with a hospital outside Metro Manila to establish a Center of Excellence for Clinical Trials.

July 24, 2020 – Novartis Healthcare Philippines and De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute (DLSMHSI) have signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to establish a Center of Excellence for Clinical Trials that will focus on research and development of innovative medicines and vaccines. The agreement also aims to enhance the capability of DLSMHSI as a Center of Excellence in clinical studies and research in the country.

“Our partnership with DLSMHSI is part of our continuing commitment to strengthen the country's clinical research capabilities and enhance Philippine health care. We believe that healthcare research will play a key role in containing the COVID-19 pandemic and creating a more resilient healthcare system,” said Jugo Tsumura, President & Managing Director, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

“We welcome our collaboration with Novartis to conduct clinical trials across communicable and noncommunicable diseases. Although the signing of this MOA was delayed for many months because of the COVID-19 pandemic, today's formalization of our collaboration is a testament to our resilience and commitment to work together in strengthening clinical research in the country,” said Dr. Charles Yu, DLSMHSI Vice Chancellor for Research.

Located in Dasmariñas City in the province of Cavite, DLSMHSI is one of the country's leading academic and healthcare institutions, with world-class medical specialists and global clinical trial capabilities. De La Salle University Medical Center, a DLSMHSI division, is the largest tertiary hospital in Region IV-A and the first ISO 9001 certified hospital in the Philippines. In previous years, Novartis has partnered with several hospitals in Metro Manila to establish similar Centers of Excellence. The company's MOA with DLSMHSI marks the first time it has partnered with a hospital outside the National Capital Region to establish a Center of Excellence for Clinical Trials.

“Our partnership with a research-driven healthcare company such as Novartis is aligned with the Lasallian core values. DLSMHSI aims to provide opportunities for the training and development of the staff as competent, compassionate, and ethical healthcare providers. We want to continuously improve healthcare services through research and the use of state-of-the-art facilities and technology,” said Br. Augustine Boquer FSC, EdD, President of DLSMHSI.

The De La Salle Angelo King Medical Research Center (DLSAKMRC) is DLSMHSI's medical and health research hub. It produces groundbreaking researches that aim to offer solutions to national health concerns

such as TB, dengue, cancer, and other health issues. It has a Level 3 accreditation from the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, the highest accreditation level that the PHREB grants to Research Ethics Committees in research institutions, which enables it to conduct studies for Philippine Food and Drug Administration (FDA) registration of food, drugs, and devices. The center also advocates for the integration of evidence-based complementary and integrative medicine in health care.

Under the MOA, Novartis will prioritize DLSMHSI as a site for its clinical research projects that will be conducted in the Philippines while DLSMHSI will consider Novartis as a preferred research partner. Clinical research activities will focus on the following areas: innovative research, Good Clinical Practice (GCP), institutional review board capacity building, registry development, and health technology assessment (HTA).

“As an established site for international clinical trials and the capability to conduct Phase I to IV clinical trials, DLSMHSI is an ideal research partner for Novartis as we strive to develop science-based innovations that can address some of society’s most challenging healthcare issues. Through such strategic R&D collaborations, our company aims to discover and develop breakthrough treatments and search for new ways to reach as many people as possible,” said Dr. Gio Barangan, Chief Scientific Officer, Novartis Healthcare Philippines.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Dr. Yu underscored the importance of multi-stakeholder collaborations on healthcare R&D. “In the looming darkness brought about by this pandemic, we must not forget that there are other diseases that can kill more people than COVID-19, and we are already seeing this. Patients with COPD [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease], TB [tuberculosis], heart disease, hypertension and cancer must also be cared for. I strongly believe that research can change the way we treat and care for patients.”



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(L-R) Giovell Barangan, MD (Chief Scientific Officer, Novartis Healthcare Phil., Inc); Ma. Marissa Golla, MD (Assoc. Director, Center for Tuberculosis Research, De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute); Ivy Emily Vergara, MD (Clinical Research Medical Adviser, Novartis Healthcare Phil., Inc.)



Seated (L-R) Giovell Barangan, MD (Chief Scientific Officer, Novartis Healthcare Phil., Inc); Ma. Marissa Golla, MD (Assoc. Director, Center for Tuberculosis Research, De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute); Ivy Emily Vergara, MD (Clinical Research Medical Adviser, Novartis Healthcare Phil., Inc.) Standing (L-R): Ms. Jesusa Garcia (Project Manager, Research Division, De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute); Emmanuel Perez, MD (Assoc. Director, Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute)

About Novartis

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people's lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world's top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach more than 750 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 105,000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at www.novartis.com.

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