

Clinical Research Malaysia & Novartis Malaysia Inks MoU to make Sarawak General Hospital a preferred site for clinical trials

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- *MoU solidifies Malaysia's positioning as a one-stop centre for clinical research in the region and affirms SGH's capabilities as a clinical trial site*
- *With the inclusion of early phase clinical trials in this country, Malaysian patients would now be able to access innovative therapies and treatments not currently available in the country*

Kuching, September 6,2022 – Novartis Malaysia together with Clinical Research Malaysia (CRM), achieved a new collaborative milestone today with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to make Sarawak General Hospital (SGH) a preferred clinical trial site to conduct Novartis sponsored trials in Malaysia.

This MoU builds on SGH's accreditation in 2019 under the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency Phase 1 Unit Inspection & Accreditation Programme enabling it to conduct such early phase studies.

As the center of excellence for clinical trials, SGH would now be able to provide patients access to innovative therapies and treatments that may be beyond reach. During the trial, they will be closely monitored by a team of healthcare professionals. If the patient responds well to the treatment, it will enable them to lead a better quality of life. Furthermore, having this facility in Sarawak will attract more specialists and talents to the state, which will address the health equality gap in East Malaysia.

Additionally, the signing of this MoU will potentially contribute to the country's economic growth, create new skilled employment opportunities in life sciences, and attract other investments in clinical studies. With the increased number of studies taking place in Malaysia, this, in turn, will propel the country to gain a reputation as a leading regional hub for clinical trials in the pharmaceutical industry.

Elwakil Mohamed, Country President of Novartis Malaysia, said: *"As part of our purpose is to reimagine medicine to improve and extend people's lives, Novartis Malaysia has been supportive in strengthening the country's health care, particularly in the area of clinical research and trials. In 2020, we invested in 38 clinical trials (CT) in cardio-metabolic, respiratory, breast cancer and ophthalmology and about 194 local patients were enrolled in these CTs."*

"Between 2015 and 2021, Novartis brought in 68 sponsored research, thus making it the top contributor of clinical trials by a multinational pharmaceutical company in the country and as a valuable partner to the Ministry of Health."

"This partnership is a crucial milestone for Novartis Malaysia in increasing our research footprint in Malaysia. This partnership with CRM, on behalf of SGH, will create a platform to enhance local capabilities, improve clinical trial quality, and increase access to transformative treatment in the country."

YB In his keynote address at the MoU ceremony, YB Tuan Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Health, said:

"This MoU is an important milestone apart from me moving Malaysia from sick care to health care, making it a leading hub in terms of clinical research and clinical trials in South East Asia. Most importantly, with the infusion of this early phase of the clinical trial in the country, Malaysians will be able to access innovative therapies and treatments that may have been beyond reach."

"Through this MoU, SGH now will become the preferred site and the center of excellence in Malaysia. From a talent and value perspective, it will attract more specialists and talents to the state, which can contribute to its economy and address unmet needs."

YB Tuan Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Health, together with Professor Dato' Sri Dr Sim Kui Hian, Sarawak Deputy Premier and Minister of Public Health, Housing & Local Government Sarawak; Dr Ooi Choo Huck, Sarawak Health Department Director and Dr Ngien Hie Ung, Hospital Director, Sarawak General Hospital were present as the guest-of-honor to witness the signing ceremony. Representing Novartis Malaysia in the signing event and exchange of documents was Mohamed Elwakil, Country President of Novartis Malaysia, Clinical Research Malaysia CEO, Dr Akhmal Yusof, and SGH Hospital Director, Dr Ngien Hie Ung.

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 nearly 800 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 108,000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at <https://www.novartis.com>.

About Novartis Malaysia

Novartis Malaysia has been present in Malaysia since 1971. Following the merger of Sandoz and Ciba-Geigy, Novartis was formed in 1996. In 2015, Kuala Lumpur was chosen as one of the five Novartis Global Service Centres which delivers a broad variety of services to the Novartis group of companies worldwide. Services offered by the Kuala Lumpur team include IT, People & Organization Services, FRA Operations, Procurement Services, Real Estate & Facilities Services and CONEXTS contributor by Clinical Research Malaysia in sponsored research with 16 research projects, leading the market of other healthcare players in this sponsored research space.

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Rais Anderson
Communications and Engagement
anders_rais.andersen@novartis.com

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- <https://www.novartis.com/>
- mailto:anders_rais.andersen@novartis.com