

## The Government of Armenia signs strategic partnership with WHISE-Embleema

10 April 2019 | News

**The Consortium's role is to provide digital tools that enable patients and medical professionals to build a holistic view of their health, to leverage this wealth of data to accelerate medical research in the country**



The Republic of Armenia Ministry of Health embraces national digital health agenda, partnering with WHISE-Embleema to digitize healthcare data in order to promote science research.

Patients will benefit from access to real-time healthcare data to better inform research in high prevalence diseases areas, including cancer, hematological, immune system and endocrine disorders.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has announced a partnership with the WHISE-Embleema Consortium, an organization whose mission is to accelerate the research and development of innovative new medical treatments, by providing incentives for the use of health data through patient ownership, via the exchange of proprietary data, and add value through intellectual and analytic insights.

The Consortium's role is to provide digital tools that enable patients and medical professionals to build a holistic view of their health, to leverage this wealth of data to accelerate medical research in the country.

In collaboration and under the guidance of the Ministry of Health, the WHISE-Embleema Consortium has established a WHISE-Armenia non-for-profit foundation. Armenian health officials led by Dr. Arsen Torosyan and WHISE leadership have negotiated conditions that will permit the WHISE Consortium and its affiliate members led by Dr. Prof. Vahan Simonyan to audit existing digital and paper data ecosystems, to propose and implement novel technologies for digital healthcare, and connect cohorts with international research organizations. WHISE-Armenia will host a set of integrated health data hubs, that will allow medical organizations to integrate a variety of healthcare datasets, to secure patient privacy and empower patients, doctors and clinical organizations to stay in control of their data.

This partnership's mission is to lay out a foundation for the collection of trustworthy health data, built on blockchain technology and regulatory HIVE analytics, to enable patient ownership of information generated on their behalf, opt-in for pre-clinical or clinical research by providing informed consent to accelerate information exchanges. This will lead to the harmonization of the digital processes through WHISE-Embleema protocols, to build up longitudinal datasets from multiple hospitals and clinics in form of medical histories, genomes, lab results, adverse event reports, insurance payments, and wellness information from wearables.

Arsen Torosyan, Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia said, "We welcome this project and are pleased to cooperate with WHISE-Embleema Consortium. The Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Health are ready to support the Ecosystem Modernization and Development Initiative in Armenia, which will increase productivity of doctors, improve health facilities and patient's social status. All this implies a higher quality of data collection and its more accurate analysis. As a result of the digitalization of health data, we expect improvement of healthcare quality and decline in comorbidity."

The practical next step by the WHISE-Armenia foundation is to integrate with institutions and care centers involved in building health data and patient registries, namely from the Center of Medical Genetics and Primary Healthcare, Oncology and Hematology Centers, as well as other research and clinical facilities.

Data aggregated by the project will be marketized through the WHISE-Armenia portal, so that industry partners may finance specific research. The funds will be redistributed as a pay to patients, and their physicians, as well as to clinics and hospitals to cover the gaps in existing infrastructure, remodel and renovate hospital facilities, purchase new laboratory equipment, and educate doctors and nurses for clinical trial conduct.

Dr. Prof Vahan Simonyan, President of WHISE-Armenia and former Director of Bioinformatics Research and Development at the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) said, "We are excited and honored to receive this endorsement from Armenia. Patient owned data can transform biomedical research, allowing information generated in the process of care to generate reliable, continuous real-world data regarding a medical product's benefit and risk profiles pre and post FDA market approval. Faster, standardized real-world data in combination with genomic data evidence that we intend to fund, will accelerate the availability of new treatments and improve the safety and the discovery of new therapeutic indications, some of which are endemic in Armenia. Armenia is one of the oldest countries with a lot of hope and inspiration in its newly elected democratic leadership. We are dedicated in this partnership and investment into the country's future to engage the leaders and scientists to benefit patients in Armenia."

Alexis Normand, Head of the Embleema Blockchain Consortium added, "We are honored to participate in this strategic partnership with Armenia, and we are convinced that this will bring significant benefits to patients, by offering physicians better access to health data and connect Armenia to international research, namely in oncology, immunotherapy and molecular medicine. By streamlining the collection and sharing of clinical information, while ensuring patient consent, we aim to accelerate the development of new drugs and improve the real-world data collection of marketed drugs."

After patient cohorts of interests have been allocated, WHISE-Embleema through its affiliate WHISE-Armenia will attract clinical trials and satellite industries to Armenia. The first round of operations will target such endemic conditions as oncology, hematological, immune system and endocrine system diseases. Aggregated data across healthcare providers is expected to generate value for other disease areas of interest as time progresses.