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Penn Medicine to expand collaboration on translational research in Abu Dhabi

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To potentiate the development of a translational medicine and therapeutics ecosystem



The Department of Health – Abu Dhabi (DoH), the regulator of the healthcare sector, has signed a second Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn Medicine), US to expand partnership in education, research and innovation programmes.

Both parties will further collaborate on translational research ecosystem development, as well as launch innovative collaborative research involving "second labs" that leverage and build capabilities in Abu Dhabi and at Penn Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US in leading-edge areas of science.

The MoU has been signed by Dr Asma Ibrahim Al Mannaei, Executive Director of the Research and Innovation Centre at DoH and Mick Merritt, Chief Operating Officer and Lead for Global Clinical Programmes, at Perelman School of Medicine at Penn Medicine.

Through this MoU, DoH and Penn Medicine seek to design and develop a translational medicine ecosystem based on Penn's Institute for Translational Medicine and Therapeutics (ITMAT). In addition, the MoU seeks to explore the potential of launching two multi-year collaborative research programmes. One focuses on the expanded application of artificial intelligence to identify new potential antibiotics. The other focuses on longitudinal follow-up and genetic analysis of people with Alzheimer's in Abu Dhabi that will facilitate cross-population comparative analysis and unique attributes that ultimately enable global prevention and early diagnosis.

With the aim of bridging the gap between preliminary research and practical applications in medical practices, translational research seeks to translate research discoveries from laboratory findings and clinical studies into practical applications to improve human health.

This collaboration will potentiate the development of a translational medicine and therapeutics ecosystem to further enable capacity development and the creation of novel discoveries and treatments in Abu Dhabi. This will involve the development of research training and educational programmes for healthcare professionals to upskill the workforce in various healthcare domains including medical science, biomedical research and health technology.