BioSpectrum the business of Bio & Health Sciences ASIA EDITION

Japan, Singapore to bring innovation in drug, device, technology

November 29, 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

Singapore: Japan's Kanagawa Prefecture's Global Collaboration Center for Life Innovation (GCC) and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*Star), the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the National University Health System (NUHS) have signed a memorandum of understanding to accelerate the development and commercialization of innovative products such as drugs, diagnostic tests and medical devicesto be approved for markets such as Japan, the US, the EU, and Asia.

Under the umbrella of this MOU, drugs, diagnostic tests and medical devices targeting cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes and infectious diseases like dengue fever will be the focus of research, development and commercialisation work to be carried out jointly by Japanese companies and Singaporean researchers.

"It is my great pleasure to witness the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the Singapore authorities and GCC, which will be a tremendously beneficial achievement for both Singapore and Kanagawa Prefecture. Through this bond, I strongly hope that Member Companies of GCC and Companies of Kanagawa Prefecture related to life-science industry will strengthen their collaboration with Singapore and expand their business in Asian market and beyond," said Mr. Yuji Kuroiwa, Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture.

The prefecture is Japan's largest, with a GDP the size of Turkey's and Austria's. It is also home to the biggest number of R&D centres in Japan. The GCC was established to support research, development, funding and commercialization of Japan's technologies as well as those of partner countries.

Professor Tan Chorh Chuan, NUS President and NUHS Chairman, said, "We are very excited about this collaboration with the GCC and A*STAR. NUS and NUHS have strong expertise in biomedical sciences of relevance to Asia, and this partnership will provide a good platform for joint work to translate our scientific discoveries into new solutions to improve health. This collaboration has a strong potential to break new ground in developing novel clinical approaches and treatments for cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes and infectious diseases of importance to Singapore, Japan, and Asia."

Dr Raj Thampuran, Managing Director, A*STAR, said, "The collaboration is an opportunity for A*STAR and the GCC to leverage on each other's strengths for mutually beneficial outcomes as we advance public-private partnerships. Singapore has excellent technological and research capabilities, and its multi-ethnic population represents the larger 3.2 billion Asian market. Singapore is also well positioned as a test-bed for leading innovative technologies to be clinically validated, registered and deployed. This provides a value proposition for the GCC to help Japanese companies to understand the consumer insights and unique clinical needs, in order to develop products and services for the growing Asian market."