BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Milestone partnership highlighting Korea's expanding influence in global biotech innovation

June 3, 2025 | News

MarkHerz teams up with TUM Hospital for joint development of cardiovascular and diabetes-targeted AAV gene therapies

MarkHerz Inc., a South Korea-based biotechnology startup specialising in AAV-based gene therapies targeting cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Klinikum rechts der Isar, the university hospital affiliated with the Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany.

The agreement aims to establish a broad-based collaboration on the joint research and development of next-generation gene therapies for ischemic heart and peripheral vascular diseases.

This will center around MarkHerz's proprietary MAAV Platform, which enables the development of precision-targeted AAV (adeno associated virus) gene therapies, particularly its MRTF-A candidate. The collaboration will include preclinical and clinical trials, technology consulting, and the sharing of research infrastructure.

MarkHerz's entry into Germany reflects a strategic initiative to complement Korea's increasingly regulated domestic environment by leveraging Europe's flexible clinical trial pathways, such as EMA's Early Access programmes and Investigator-Initiated Trials. TUM Hospital's extensive cardiovascular preclinical models and translational research capacity are expected to generate high-quality data recognized by global regulatory agencies, including the EMA, FDA, PMDA, and MFDS.

MarkHerz's MRTF-A treatment aims to overcome the limitations of existing protein-based treatments, such as VEGF and FGF, by promoting functional blood vessel regeneration through endothelial recovery.

This agreement positions MarkHerz to strengthen ties with not only TUM, but also Ludwig Maximilian University (LMU) Munich and the BioM Cluster, forming a robust network across Europe's premier scientific institutions.