

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Clinart MENA gears up for regional expansion in clinical trials**



With a new chief executive officer (CEO) at the helm and a recent injection of funds from a Kuwait-based healthcare investment company, clinical research organization (CRO) Clinart MENA is hoping to lead the way in making the Middle East and North Africa a premier destination for clinical trials.

“As the CRO market in the region is relatively young, we believe we are perfectly positioned to grow the industry, learning from other emerging markets that started before us,” said CEO Dr Alaa Assem at an event in Dubai, where Clinart MENA also announced a new brand identity and discussed its expansion plans for the MENA countries.

“There is a lot of room both for us to grow and for others to come into the market,” he added.

Although the CRO market in the MENA region grew by 106% between 2008 and 2010, its share of global clinical studies is still relatively small, Clinart MENA points out. Estimated at US\$250 million, the market accounts for just 1% of the global total.

All the same, this 1% does not include some of the local studies run by indigenous institutions and academia in the MENA countries, the CRO points out.

#### **Follow the trend**

Dr Alaa sees the MENA region capitalizing on the general trend of outsourcing to emerging markets as pharmaceutical companies look to bring their drugs to market more quickly and cost-efficiently.

“The amount of studies being done in Asia, Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America is constantly increasing,” he commented.

Clinart MENA feels well placed to continue expanding rapidly across the Middle East following the unspecified capital investment from Kuwait Life Sciences Company (KLSC), which focuses on innovative concepts and services offering significant value to the healthcare sector in Kuwait, the Gulf and the Middle East.

#### **Deep belief**



“Through this unique and strategic investment, KLSC is expressing its deep belief in the need to foster a clinical research culture and infrastructure in the MENA region,” said Qais Marafie, chairman of KLSC.

“We support Clinart MENA to invest in developing the skills of researchers, expand networks of research partners and optimize its services.”

Clinart MENA provides full-service clinical-trial management support from early phase through to market approval and post-market surveillance studies.

It has local offices in the United Arab Emirates (its base), Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Egypt, while it covers Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco through local partnerships.