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DA Prasanna, vice chairman and MD, AcuNova Life Sciences

AcuNova Life Sciences, a subsidiary of Bangalore-based Manipal AcuNova Ltd, has entered into a strategic collaboration with Kiecana Clinical Research (KCR), based in Warsaw, Poland, for leveraging operations in South Asia, Europe and Latin America. This alliance has resulted in the formation of a regional expert CRO aimed at quality clinical trials conducted on time, at competitive costs. The alliance will focus on therapeutic areas like oncology, cardio-vascular, endocrinology and neurology. This is an innovative alliance. DA Prasanna shares his view points on the benefits that accrue through such collaborations.

What is the scope of this alliance?

A team of over 250 professionals including 39 MDs and 12 PhDs will bring their insight into disease prevalence and standards of care and building quality for clients. The alliance will focus on phase I-IV trials, combining the geographic knowledge of sites and investigators with therapeutic expertise. India, East Europe and Latin America today have become key destinations for speedy recruitment into trials at competitive cost. And AcuNova-KCR alliance will deliver quality, speed and cost advantage across the three most exciting regions. India has emerged as the leader in generics and software. The alliance will offer clients high quality data management and biostatistics service, as well as conduct of PK/PD studies

What are the benefits of forming a regional expert CRO?

This global alliance aims at increasing patient recruitment in newer regions like East Europe for AcuNova clients and South Asia and Latin America for KCR clients. Further, while AcuNova would get access to the patient population in Central and Eastern Europe (470 million) and Latin America (200 million), KCR would get access to India (1.2 billion), enabling both companies to maintain the highest standards and comply with global mandates. Besides, AcuNova will get FDA submission expertise and KCR will gain from the CDM and biostatistics capabilities. The collaboration will add value to clients who wish to expand their trials and to newer markets, thereby increasing speed and reducing risks.

How will AcuNova gain from the alliance globally and in India?

International clients are more at ease with CROs that have multi region presence and offer end-to-end service. We are able to address this need, with KCR, a highly reputed CRO in Central and East Europe. KCR's regional expertise combined with its strength in FDA submissions is a new form of alliance for our industry and we are excited about this.

What is India's advantage through such collaboration?

This alliance will establish the beginning of a new form of alliance-the formation of a regional expert CRO.

Ch.Srinivas Rao

SIRO Clinpharm bags award

The Partner of Choice Awards 2007 instituted by Frost & Sullivan, recognizes the best Indian research and manufacturing services capability in life sciences and assesses its global competitiveness. "The facilities that were commended as award recipients are those who have achieved and sustained excellence in their industry value chain component with the diligence, perseverance, foresight and dedication required to develop a successful organization and sustain continuous learning to be the true Partners of Choice" said Mahesh Sawant, program manager, biotechnology and life sciences, healthcare practice, Frost & Sullivan.

The award recipients include:

Partner of Choice in Contract Research-Chemistry Based Services: Research Support International Ltd

Partner of Choice in Contract Research-Collaborative Drug Discovery: Orchid Research Laboratories Ltd

Partner of Choice in Contract Research-Preclinical Safety Assessment: Jai Research Foundation

Partner of Choice in Clinical Research-Phase I Studies: Veeda Clinical Research Private Ltd

Partner of Choice in Clinical Research-Phase II to IV Studies: SIRO Clinpharm Pvt Ltd

Partner of Choice in Clinical Research-Data Management Services: Cognizant Technology Solutions

Partner of Choice in Clinical Research-Data Central Laboratory Services: SRL Ranbaxy

Partner of Choice in Bioavailability/Bioequivalence Studies: Manipal AcuNova

Partner of Choice in Contract Manufacturing-Oral Solid Dosage forms: Nicholas Piramal India Limited

Partner of Choice in Contract Manufacturing-Sterile Dosage forms: Nicholas Piramal India Limited

"This is a proud moment for all of us at SIRO. I hope we continue to achieve more and more awards and success in future. We believe our clients are in a race to bring the best possible cures to diseases afflicting mankind. It shall be our constant endeavor to support and facilitate them to win the race in the shortest time, best ethics and highest safety," said Chetan Tamhankar, chief operating officer, SIRO Clinpharm Pvt Ltd.