Global Engagement Office

UCL PRO-VICE-PROVOST (SOUTH ASIA)
PROFESSOR MARIE CARINE LALL

Professor Fiona Watt
Chief Executive
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Dear Professor Watt

UCL initiative to establish an International Centre for Genomic Medicine in Neuromuscular Disease with partners in India, Turkey, South Africa, Zambia and Brazil.

I am writing in my capacity as Pro-Vice-Provost (South Asia) at University College London to strongly support this innovative proposal and to confirm that the expertise of UCL's global research team will provide strategic and operational advice on the successful conduct of this programme. This is based on our extensive experience in such international programmes.

The International Centre for Genomic Medicine in Neuromuscular Diseases would have long-lasting research and health benefits for patients with Neuromuscular Disease.

UCL has many years of working in low and medium income countries, and especially with India. For example, we have recently had an inward visit from the Government of India's All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), and I am pleased to inform you that they are very keen to collaborate in this initiative, and be part of the consortium.

My team and I have worked tirelessly with Professor M Hanna and Dr R Pitceathly to gain AIIMS on board. Their visit to UCL last week confirmed that they are particularly keen to develop appropriate screening and simple health interventions including cardiorespiratory, gastroenterological, metabolic and physiotherapy, train a new generation of clinical academics who will become the leaders of genomic medicine and specialist care delivery and identify patients who will benefit from using repurposed cheap drugs for some conditions such as channelopathies.

All this would be underpinned by AIIMS participating in clinical trials which they are keen to do, and share genetic data through a purpose-built and accessible bioinformatics data platform for use by the consortium.

In short, this initiative will empower all clinicians and clinical researchers to analyse their own patients' NGS data on the RD-Connect genome phenome analysis platform and derive molecular diagnoses.

I unreservedly commend the UCL initiative, and I wish the application success.

Yours sincerely

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