AstraZeneca has announced a strategic partnership with Peking University 3rd Hospital to open its first Clinical Pharmacology Unit (CPU) in China. The unit aims to enhance local clinical research capabilities and speed up access to new medicines to benefit Chinese patients.

The CPU will focus on Phase I clinical research, including clinical pharmacology and safety evaluations — steps necessary for launching new medicines in China. Under the co-operative agreement, AstraZeneca will provide Peking University 3rd Hospital with personnel training, system audits and consulting services, and will also invest to upgrade facilities necessary for clinical research of medicines for infections, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. The unit will accelerate access to new medicines from overseas and benefit Chinese patients in need. In addition, it is set to expand the capabilities of early phase clinical research for local clinical pharmacology organizations, and take China’s clinical research capabilities to a new level through further R&D cooperation and academic exchange with the local medical community.

“AstraZeneca is committed to enhancing clinical research capabilities in China. The CPU is established according to AstraZeneca’s global standards. The collaboration with Peking University 3rd Hospital is a great example of AstraZeneca’s patient-oriented global strategy to strengthen our R&D pipeline for Chinese patients,” said David Brennan, CEO of AstraZeneca. “The CPU is using a new and innovative operating model for partnership between AstraZeneca and a premier Chinese university hospital that will result in a faster, more efficient and flexible link between phase I studies and our phase II and III clinical research projects.”

With China’s rapid economic growth and increasing demand for better healthcare, AstraZeneca has enjoyed sustained business growth, achieving a 25% sales increase in China in the first half of 2007. AstraZeneca is also stepping up investment in China: it announced investments of US$100

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million in R&D last year; followed by the establishment of its R&D base, the AstraZeneca Innovation Center China (ICC) at Shanghai’s Zhangjiang Hi-Tech Park. The ICC’s initial therapeutic focus will be on cancer, a major cause of death in China. In addition, AstraZeneca’s China sourcing center was founded in Shanghai in January as part of the company’s efforts to strengthen global sourcing of active pharmaceutical ingredients.

Mr Brennan added: “China plays an increasingly important role as an emerging market in AstraZeneca’s global strategy. We will continue to implement our vision of being “In China for China,” with long term planning and investment. We fully support China’s national focus on innovation by substantially increasing our R&D investment, both in financial terms and in terms of scientific collaboration. We will ramp up development of innovative medicines for Chinese patients.”

About AstraZeneca
AstraZeneca is one of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies with healthcare sales of about US$26 billion in 2006 and a leading position in sales of gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory, oncology and infection products. AstraZeneca is ranked 252 in the world’s top 500 multinational companies list compiled by Fortune Magazine in 2007. The company has its headquarters in London, with 65,000 employees worldwide.

AstraZeneca China has its headquarters in Shanghai, with 25 branch offices in major cities across China. It has nearly 3000 employees working for the sectors of manufacturing, sales, clinical research and new product development. The manufacturing plant located in Wuxi, Jiangsu province, is AstraZeneca’s biggest production base in Asia with an investment of US$170 million. In May 2006, AstraZeneca announced investments of US$100 million to establish its R&D base, the AstraZeneca Innovation Centre China (ICC), at Shanghai’s Zhangjiang Hi-Tech Park.