

# Manipal AcuNova opens clinical research centre near Bangalore

**Our Bureau**  
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Bangalore-based contract research organisation Manipal AcuNova launched its Asia Clinical Research Centre at Whitefield near here on Monday.

Set up with an investment of around Rs 9 crore, the centre will support research related to clinical drug development and drug discovery with focus on the global market.

It would hire 150 professionals for various skills, said Mr D.A. Prasanna, Vice-Chairman & MD, Manipal AcuNova. Manipal AcuNova, set up 10 months ago as a venture of Manipal Education & Medical Group and AcuNova Life Sci-

ences P Ltd, has completed two studies for GE Healthcare related to parkinsonism and diabetes-related cardiac problems.

Sir William Castell, Vice-Chairman of GE and Chairman of GE Healthcare, who inaugurated the facility, signed an MoU with Manipal for further collaborations in the coming years. GE expected to reach its diagnostic products to the market at least a couple of years sooner by outsourcing research to Asian centres such as

Manipal's. "We expect a large number of trials to be conducted in India, covering at least 600-800 patients a year," he said.

Mr Prasanna said, "This clinical research centre will bring under one roof our key offerings in drug development and research for the pharmaceutical industry.

Locating the centre in Bangalore helps co-locating with leading healthcare research companies like GE Healthcare and the opportunity to inte-

grate our clinical research practice with high quality IT infrastructure."

The new facility houses a central reference lab, radiology core lab and a cardiac safety monitoring lab.

Manipal AcuNova COO, Dr Ramananda Nadig, said the CRO has an in-house expertise of 1,300 physicians of the Manipal Network of Hospitals and access to over 1.2 million patients per year. It has conducted 22 studies ranging from phase 2 to phase 4 in varied therapeutic areas. Its clients include Aventis, Biocon, GE Healthcare, Novartis and Quintiles. The CRO, which has raised Rs 11 crore from IIL&PS, has said it aims to be the number 1 CRO in the country.