News Release

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£7m deal exports Scottish medical and science expertise to China

Experts from the University of Edinburgh are to take part in a £7m healthcare and science initiative in China's third largest city, Shenzhen.

The University will provide medical and scientific knowledge over the next four years as the city attempts to increase its number of hospital beds by 22,000.

Staff from Edinburgh will support medical education and research at Shenzhen University's new medical school and teaching hospital campus – which is due to open in 2017.

The partnership with China-based Hua Xia Healthcare Holdings will establish the University of Edinburgh - Hua Xia Healthcare Institute for Medical Research, Education and Management at Edinburgh BioQuarter, Little France.

The institute will support the development, planning and management of healthcare projects in Shenzhen, a city with a population of more than 10 million.

The agreement follows a 2013 Memorandum of Understanding regarding creative and technology sector collaboration between the City of Shenzhen and City of Edinburgh Council.

The initiative has been welcomed by both partners and represents a major breakthrough in the UK's efforts to engage with healthcare in China.

The initiative will provide an innovative and sustainable model for supporting healthcare projects in China.

The agreement will also deliver inward investment to Scotland and help provide opportunities for UK-based medical technology companies to enter the Chinese market.

University of Edinburgh Vice Principal Professor Andrew Morris said: "This collaboration has the prospect of taking Edinburgh's outstanding expertise and, in partnership with colleagues from China, delivering benefits to patients and populations on an unprecedented scale."

"Scotland has an enviable global reputation for pioneering research and education. With Shenzhen's well established infrastructure and emphasis on innovation, we are well-positioned to research how embracing technology and new educational models can provide better outcomes by disrupting traditional healthcare approaches."

Dr David Jiang, CEO of Hua Xia Healthcare said: "The University of Edinburgh is one of the best educational institutions in the world, especially strong in medical education, research and technology transfer. As a fast growing institution, Shenzhen University and its medical school have responsibilities to support the increasing needs for quality healthcare in the city."

"As a leading healthcare service provider in China, Hua Xia Healthcare is very pleased to have established a long term cooperation with the two universities. We hope to work closely with them to bring the best technologies and management skills to the city of Shenzhen."

City of Edinburgh Council's Economy Convener Councillor Gavin Barrie said: "This project expands the Edinburgh Shenzhen relationship into world class life sciences, reflecting our ambitious plans to showcase Edinburgh's technical expertise at an international level. When we hosted the Mayor of Shenzhen in September 2016 to mark the first anniversary of the Edinburgh-Shenzhen Creative Exchange, we were delighted to support this University of Edinburgh initiative and included a visit to the Edinburgh BioQuarter."

The Chinese government has targeted major healthcare growth by 2020, aiming spend £1 trillion per year and train 150,000 new doctors and two million nurses.

Hua Xia Healthcare Holdings provides general hospital and healthcare management services and pharmaceutical wholesale and distribution in the Peoples Republic of China.

The agreement follows last year's announcement of an innovative degree partnership between the University of Edinburgh and Zhejiang University in China. A collaborative biomedical science degree will be taught entirely in English by Edinburgh and Zhejiang academics at Zhejiang's new international campus in Hangzhou.

Both projects underpin Edinburgh's commitment to strengthen research and teaching partnerships and reinforce the University's position as a partner of choice in China.

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