

I.R.C.C.S. INSTITUTES: The success of medical research

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Policlinico San Matteo Foundation: worldwide reference in biomedical research

The historic city of Pavia, is the home of Policlinico San Matteo. The President of the hospital is Doctor Alessandro Moneta who explains that the hospital has a long history of excellence in organ transplants. "With high success rates and many years of experience, the San Matteo hospital is renowned in Italy as specialists in heart, kidney, bone marrow and cornea transplants."

The hospital's breast cancer unit is one of the highest performing in the country. Other departments that have been highly commended are in stomach and pelvic surgery, their treatment of kidney tumours and cancers of the digestive system as well as the acclaimed MIS (minimally invasive surgery - keyhole surgery) unit.

The hospital has a large accident and emergency unit, where their treatment of heart and respiratory failure has been classified excellent. They specialise in the use of ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation) - an extracorporeal technique of providing oxygen to patients whose heart or lungs are so severely diseased or damaged that they can no longer serve their function.

The San Matteo functions as a general hospital but also forms a fundamental part of the faculty of medicine of the University of Pavia. In accordance with directives set out by the Region, the faculty are due to transfer to the grounds of the hospital which once complete, will mean the creation of the biggest university campus in Europe.



Alessandro Moneta
President I.R.C.C.S. Policlinico San Matteo
Foundation

President Moneta explains why this is so important, "Ultimately the positioning of the centre of medical education next to a functioning hospital will increase the standards

both of teaching as well as that of the care we are able to give to our patients through the creation of a single integrated healthcare framework, encompassing the entire cycle from training doctors to delivering the highest most specialised forms of treatment."

The hospital is involved in many national and international research projects. President Moneta explains: "Participating in research is the key element of being an I.R.C.C.S. foundation. The San Matteo Hospital is a worldwide point of reference in the area of biomedical research. The hospital is one of the leading transplant centres in Italy and this is reflected within our research programme. Current projects are focussed on curing diseases with organ, tissue and cell transplants as well as research in to the extraction of organs from Non Heart Beating Donors (NHBD) - launched in this hospital in 2009."

The San Matteo has an impressive international collaborative portfolio. It's currently participating in around 40 international projects. Of these, a collaboration with the John Hopkins Medicine International in Maryland, USA on a project relating to treatment of cardiology patients, with the Irvine University in California working on defects in heart patients and with the University of Cape Town on molecular treatments in the event of sudden cardiac death.

They are also working with healthcare providers in many developing countries to help raise standards and awareness in order to assist in improved healthcare. President Moneta explains, "We are participating in a professional exchange programme with the Hospital of Yamoussoukro in the Ivory Coast and also assisting the Ziguinchor Hospital in Senegal with the creation of new radiology, paediatric and midwifery units."

The increased use of telemedicine in many hospitals is an enormously time saving and cost effective approach to the future of medicine, President Moneta agrees: "We are using telemedicine to help developing countries by providing remote training. An example of this is a special surgical training programme we are conducting for the Malindi hospital in Kenya. I believe that telemedicine is the future for the improvement of healthcare in the developing world. We as developed countries have a responsibility to share our expertise and assist those less fortunate than us."