

NEWS RELEASE

## NEW PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES FURTHERS LIFE-CHANGING RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS AND CARE FOR CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

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UAE donates \$35 million gift to Children's National Hospital, strengthening a range of strategic health initiatives  
Washington, D.C., Sept. 26, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Continuing a 30-year partnership that has yielded 82 U.S. patents and countless medical breakthroughs for kids and their families, the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has strengthened its transformational commitment to Children's National Hospital with a new \$35 million donation focused on prenatal, neonatal and maternal health.

The announcement of the new gift comes after a recent visit to the hospital by His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), who met with Emirati families and patients receiving care at Children's National Hospital.

The investment is the latest chapter of a longstanding philanthropic partnership between the UAE and Children's National. Each year, more than 100 Emirati families travel to Children's National for advanced pediatric care and life-saving treatments.

This latest investment will bolster various strategic health initiatives, including within the hospital's **Center for Prenatal, Neonatal & Maternal Health Research** and the **Zickler Family Prenatal Pediatrics Institute**.

Researchers in the Center for Prenatal, Neonatal & Maternal Health Research are focused on the role of perinatal factors — including maternal stress, anxiety and depression — on the developing brain of the child. Studies also are

revealing the impact of congenital anomalies such as heart disease and acquired conditions such as **maternal infection with COVID-19** or Zika virus. New approaches to prenatal and postnatal care promise to optimize long-term outcomes of many hospitalized babies.

"Children in the Washington, D.C., area and across the world benefit greatly from the breakthroughs that have emerged from the incredible decades-long partnership between the UAE and Children's National," said Michelle Riley-Brown, President and CEO of Children's National. "I am deeply grateful for the UAE's most recent gift. The contribution will positively impact children and families and support the teams of researchers and specialists who dedicate their lives to developing innovative medical care."

### Key milestones:

The UAE helped to establish the **Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation** at Children's National in 2009. Today, the Sheikh Zayed Institute (SJI) has grown into a world-class, self-sustaining research center receiving more than 80% of its funding from grants and outside sources.

This platform for invention is advancing autonomous, robotic surgery. The institute's researchers believe pediatric surgical outcomes will improve if the precision and delicacy of a robot are incorporated into procedures such as **gallbladder removal**. SJI is also propelling the use of artificial intelligence to improve pediatric medicine and expand health equity. One example is a deep learning algorithm that uses hand-held ultrasounds to detect early signs of rheumatic heart disease, which kills nearly 400,000 people worldwide each year.

"The lives and health of countless children and families in the Washington area, in the UAE and around the world have been transformed by our partnership," said Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE Ambassador to the United States. "Our continued support promises even more breakthrough innovations in pediatric medicine."

The UAE also supported the opening of the **Children's National Research & Innovation Campus** through a 2019 commitment. The campus represents the first pediatric innovation hub of its kind, where scientists, inventors, caregivers, patients' families and health authorities come together to advance pediatric health.

The Children's National Rare Disease Institute and Center for Genetic Medicine Research are two of the teams housed at the campus. Together, they are pioneering care for children in the Washington region and abroad as an international referral site for rare disorders. Two examples of their research endeavors include: **next-generation genomic testing** to better understand how differences in genetic material can affect human health and identifying biochemical analytes.

The UAE opened a medical office in Washington, D.C., in 1991. Since then, thousands of Emirati patients have

visited Children's National for lifechanging care for conditions such as congenital heart disease, neurological disorders and cancer. The hospital is currently treating 40 Emirati patients.

"Having our child treated at Children's National means accessing specialized pediatric care from a renowned institution dedicated to children's health," said Hamad Alnuaimi, an Emirati father of a Children's National patient. "It provides us with confidence and reassurance that our son is receiving the best possible medical attention from experts who understand and prioritize the unique needs of children. For the UAE to have a strong relationship with Children's National signifies a valuable connection that enhances pediatric healthcare in our country. This partnership allows us to benefit from advanced treatments, medical innovations, and expertise that might otherwise be inaccessible. It represents a commitment to improving the health and well-being of children through international collaboration."

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## About Children's National Hospital

Children's National Hospital, based in Washington, D.C., was established in 1870 to help every child grow up stronger. Today, it is the No. 5 children's hospital in the nation and ranked in all specialties evaluated by U.S. News & World Report. Children's National is transforming pediatric medicine for all children. The Children's National Research & Innovation Campus opened in 2021, a first-of-its-kind pediatric hub dedicated to developing new and better ways to care for kids. Children's National has been designated three times in a row as a Magnet® hospital, demonstrating the highest standards of nursing and patient care delivery. This pediatric academic health system offers expert care through a convenient, community-based primary care network and specialty care locations in the D.C. metropolitan area, including Maryland and Virginia. Children's National is home to the **Children's National Research Institute** and **Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation**. It is recognized for its expertise and innovation in pediatric care and as a strong voice for children through advocacy at the local, regional and national levels. As a non-profit, Children's National relies on generous donors to help ensure that every child receives the care they need.

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## Attachments

- [Walkthrough with Dr. Anthony Sandler](#)

- Dr. Charlie Berul & miniature pacemaker

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