

Advancing Global Health Through Collaboration

Hong Kong serves as a Roche R&D incubator for bringing innovation to the worldwide healthcare system at large.



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Daniel Thurley
 General Manager - Hong Kong and Macau
 Roche

A global pioneer in healthcare and innovation, Roche established its presence in Hong Kong back in 1971. Over the last 49 years, Roche Hong Kong has maintained its status as a leading pharmaceutical company in the region. With the combined strengths of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics under one roof, Roche has brought hundreds of medicines and formulations to Hong Kong, benefiting patients locally and globally.

“From the very beginning, we wanted to do now what patients need next. Our vision is to deliver better outcomes for more patients, faster,” said Daniel Thurley, General Manager - Hong Kong and Macau at Roche. “Our 10-year ambition is to deliver three to five times more medical benefit to patients at half the healthcare cost of the society. This can be achieved through prevention, cures and personalised healthcare to ensure the right medicines are given to the right person at the right time.”

A recent example is Roche’s support to launch HealthMatch in Hong Kong, an Australian-based HealthTech startup specialising in clinical trial matching. HealthMatch launched a free Global COVID-19 clinical trial tracker earlier this year, which is publicly accessible and designed to inform researchers and general public about the latest development and progress in global clinical trials, covering not just Roche medicines but also other pharmaceutical companies. The company is also running a project with the Hong Kong Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry

(HKAPI) to explore ways to better track medicines with blockchain technology.

“We are keen to bring innovation forward faster than ever before through these collaborations with Hong Kong healthcare stakeholders, including the government, the Hospital Authority, universities, startups and so on,” Thurley remarked.

Local research, global impact

Thurley believes that Hong Kong holds a special role for pharmaceutical research and development that can benefit the whole world. “Hong Kong has the capacity to generate huge insight and become a trusted place to work with data and discover medicines faster.”

According to Thurley, in R&D of new molecules, data generated here is shared with Roche’s global office. “Hong Kong has positive influence on the global level,” he said. “Research investments are made here, and once these are proven effective, they can increase patient benefit elsewhere around the world.”

With a growing number of global and regional roles following a strategic transformation to enhance agility, Roche Hong Kong has recently expanded and relocated their office to a premise in Kowloon Bay, which has been WELL-certified. The company has also newly hired a real-world data scientist in Hong Kong. They will offer to help expand the value of existing data owned by the

Hospital Authority, as well as the data that Roche has, to help patients in Hong Kong.

Thurley thinks that InvestHK plays a key role in facilitating Roche’s collaborative projects in Hong Kong. “InvestHK supports us to make connections with people and organisation at the right time and at the right place. They have also supported us in terms of having more opportunities around the new patent law launched in December 2019,” he concluded.

Roche

- Roche was founded in 1896 and headquartered in Basel, Switzerland
- Its Hong Kong office houses over 120 staff members with functions ranging from finance, human resources, research & development, marketing, as well as a large medical team
- With the majority of its workforce investment going toward R&D, Roche is looking to launch 11 new molecules in the next three years

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