Germany Devotes €150 Million to Connect Research Hospitals into Anti-Corona Network

The country’s many centers of research excellence will now be centrally linked to speed efforts to combat the pandemic

Berlin (GTAI) - Germany’s Education and Research Minister Anja Karliczek announced her ministry was investing €150 million in the project at a press conference with the chairman and the lead virologist of Berlin’s Charité hospital, which will coordinate the initiative. She said the new structure was needed to optimize researchers’ attempt to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

“The goal is to learn from and alongside each other,” Karliczek told reporters. “The corona epidemic is a challenge of a sort we haven’t faced before. I’m convinced that this unique scientific project, this concentration of strength, will allow us to take a huge step forward in researching and treating COVID-19.”

The initiative will collect and evaluate all the diagnostic and treatment strategies at Germany’s many university clinics and other hospitals. A database will be set up to systematically record all information gained from COVID-19 patients. It will allow researchers at one institution to exchange information more easily with their peers. And it will link medical and non-medical and is open to non-university research institutions such as the respected Helmholtz Association and Fraunhofer Society.

In Germany’s federal political system, universities and their attendant research hospitals fall under the jurisdiction of the country’s sixteen regional states. Experts say that the initiative will bundle the enormous expertise of doctors and researchers at these institutions and increase efficiency in developing responses to the coronavirus.

“Germany is known the world over for its excellence in medical research, but the landscape is normally very diverse, with different institutions having different focuses and approaches,” says Julia Pietsch, digital health expert at Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI). “This network will create synergies between these world-renowned research centers, prevent them from unnecessarily duplicating work and allow for faster progress in combatting the pandemic. The fact that the government is putting such a large sum of money into the project shows how seriously it is being taken.”

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