

**Thessaloniki, April 24, 2026**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Strategic Partnership of INAB/CERTH, AstraZeneca, and Papageorgiou General Hospital in Clinical Research, focusing initially on Microangiopathic Anemias  
A New Collaboration Model for the Promotion of Health and Research**

In a landmark event organized by the Institute of Applied Biosciences of the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (**INAB/CERTH**), in collaboration with the global pharmaceutical leader **AstraZeneca** and “**Papageorgiou**” **General Hospital**, a strategic partnership in the field of clinical research was presented. At the core of this partnership is the utilization of health data, with the first application focusing on microangiopathic anemias, a rare and life-threatening disease.

The collaboration aims to bridge scientific knowledge with clinical practice. By safely utilizing the extensive database of Papageorgiou Hospital, which includes data from 1.41 million patients, the partners seek to improve the diagnosis, monitoring, and therapeutic treatment of rare diseases. As noted, clinical research is a key driver of growth and contributes significantly to strengthening Greece’s international presence and recognition in the field of biomedical innovation.

During the event, distinguished executives from health administration, the scientific community, and the pharmaceutical industry, as well as representatives of the involved bodies, highlighted the importance and prospects of this cooperation. The Director of INAB/CERTH, **Dr. Anastasia Chatzidimitriou**, underlined that this study is the first in Greece to use data converted to the standard adopted by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), supported by the pharmaceutical industry, noting that the Institute consistently invests in clinical research.

In a videotaped greeting, the Minister of Development, responsible for Research and Innovation, **Mr. Stavros Kalafatis**, described clinical research as a pillar of development that enhances the country's international recognition. He emphasized that Thessaloniki can play a leading role by investing in knowledge through organizations like INAB. He characterized the partnership presented at the event as an excellent example of connecting theoretical knowledge with applied medicine, stating that the government actively supports initiatives that upgrade the health system and research, proving that the country possesses the necessary expertise for data analysis.

The Vice Regional Governor of Thessaloniki, **Mr. Konstantinos Gioutikas**, focused on the substantial contribution of INAB/CERTH to society. He praised the Institute’s contribution to promoting public health and addressing sheep and goat pox, noting that INAB was the "pillar" that allowed the market to be seamlessly supplied with domestic livestock during Easter, while protecting animal capital and supporting farmers. He described the work performed as "substantial work with results" that has a direct social benefit and a positive impact on public health.

The General Manager of CERTH, **Maria Gemou**, pointed out that the organization's primary goal is to produce work with a meaningful social footprint, with INAB being the most characteristic example.

The Medical Director of AstraZeneca Greece, **Mr. Petros Galanakis**, noted that AstraZeneca invests significantly in research and development in Greece. He stated that systematic and transparent cooperation between industry, academic institutions, hospitals, and the state is the only way to produce high-quality data. The partnership with INAB/CERTH and Papageorgiou Hospital can serve as a model for cooperation, as it inaugurates the first study in the country using real-world clinical data following the European Medicines Agency standards.

**Mr. Pantelis Natsiavas**, a Digital Health Researcher at INAB/CERTH, focused on the value of Data, describing it as an emerging and critical field for clinical research. He stressed that meaningful results require new models of strategic synergies and emphasized the need to "scale up" efforts by gradually involving more Greek hospitals in research initiatives.

The representative of the European Clinical Research Infrastructure Network (ECRIN) at INAB/CERTH, **Mr. Thomas Chatzikonstantinou**, presented the role of the Greek hub in connecting clinical centers and harmonizing studies at the European level.

The Director of the Rare Diseases Sector at AstraZeneca Greece, **Mr. Grigoris Ntakoulas**, referred to the strategic cooperation with CERTH as an initiative with a significant impact on the future of health in Greece. He emphasized that connecting clinical research, real-world data, and modern technologies can accelerate knowledge production and improve patient care, especially for serious and rare diseases.

**Mr. Konstantinos Emmanouilidis**, General Manager of Papageorgiou General Hospital, highlighted the hospital's journey toward innovation. He noted that it is one of the few in Europe to utilize secondary patient data in studies for the European Medicines Agency. He stressed that research has been integrated into the hospital's daily operations and that, despite the challenges of a public entity, achieving high goals requires continuous effort. He characterized the cooperation with AstraZeneca and INAB/CERTH as essential for creating solutions that meet real-world clinical needs.

**Ms. Maria Bigaki**, Head of the Programs Department at Papageorgiou Hospital, presented the hospital's impressive progress in research and innovation. She described this collaboration as a milestone, as the study on microangiopathic anemias aims for the full integration of digital health into research.

During a discussion on the potential and prospects of clinical research, the Governor of the 3rd Health Region, **Mr. Dimitris Tsalikakis**, focused on institutional changes and the need for cooperation between hospitals and the research community. He also mentioned the importance of new legislation that accelerates procedures, specifically noting that clinical study files are now processed by the National Organization for Medicines (EOF) in parallel.

**Mr. Kostas Stamatopoulos**, Director of Research at INAB/CERTH, provided an in-depth analysis of clinical research in Greece. He mentioned that in the past, hospitals did not participate in national research planning. He emphasized that collaborations between the pharmaceutical industry, research centers, and hospitals are the natural path for promoting clinical research in the country. He stated that clinical research is inconceivable without hospitals and stressed the need for trust and security in managing patient data, summarizing the success of these efforts in three words: trust, transparency, and respect.

**Mr. Panagiotis Pateinakis**, a nephrologist at Papageorgiou General Hospital, explained that utilizing digital data allows for a better understanding of rare diseases that cause microthrombosis. He characterized the doctor-patient relationship as a matter of trust, which allows doctors to encourage patients to participate in clinical studies.

The event concluded with the consensus that partnerships and people are what will change the health landscape, with the 3rd Health Region declaring its openness to new proposals utilizing clinical data.

Following the workshop, a **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)** was signed between INAB/CERTH and AstraZeneca, serving as a framework agreement for conducting collaborative clinical studies.

#### **Request for publication.**

For any additional information or clarification, you may contact Ms. Foteini Kopani, CERTH-INAB Management Office, at +30 2310 498272.