



# How Is AstraZeneca Expanding UAE Medical Supplies?

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The UAE and its populace have enjoyed a positive relationship with British-Swedish pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Now, the two entities are looking to build on that good groundwork through a collaboration which will target one of the biggest killers in the world – cancer.

AstraZeneca are set to offer their expanding array of new and innovative oncology medicines to the UAE, as well as work with the Emirati authorities to promote cancer awareness among the populace and encourage regular screenings. In turn, this will enhance early detection rates and save lives in a part of the world where cancer is expected to increase its grip in the coming years.

## A solid footing

AstraZeneca is already well known to the UAE healthcare sector (and vice versa) after their ground-breaking work together during the coronavirus pandemic. Indeed, AstraZeneca’s pioneering [use of technology to aid drug development](#) was one of the driving forces behind the discovery of a viable vaccine candidate, which has undoubtedly helped to save countless lives across the globe.

For their part, the pharma giants have been equally impressed with the facilities and infrastructure they have witnessed in place in the Emirates. That not only applies to the government’s rapid response and impressive containment of Covid-19, but also to its oncology care. For example, the VPS Healthcare site at Burjeel Medical City has been hailed by AstraZeneca’s executive vice-president of oncology as “one of the most innovative cancer centres in the Middle East”.

## Sharing expertise

With several of its clinical trials being undertaken in collaboration with Emirati health boards, AstraZeneca has indicated it is “optimistic” about the UAE being able to enjoy the fruits of those labours. The company already has a scientific office inside the country, with its Dubai-based branch ensuring that its medicines are distributed throughout the country safely and efficiently.

The UAE is delighted to be able to benefit from that expertise and ability, especially given that cancer rates are expected to rise in the region in the near future. That’s



due to a mixture of the ageing populations of many Middle Eastern countries and the sedentary lifestyles favoured by a large section of citizens, alongside improved efficacy and attendance of diagnosis techniques.

## **Catching cancer early**

Indeed, it's this advance in cancer screening capabilities that is the UAE's best hope at helping afflicted parties overcome the disease. It's for this reason that the government have embarked on a concerted campaign to raise awareness around the dangers of cancer in conjunction with AstraZeneca.

The partnership has already borne impressive results. Launched in March 2021, the 'New Normal, Same Cancer' initiative has instigated a 59% rise in screenings across the country. That campaign was followed up by another focusing on lung cancer detection late last year, while a third programme entitled 'Accelerating Change Together' is hoping to build upon that momentum to encourage everyone to get themselves checked and catch the disease before it spreads out of control.