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## UH, Cardialysis team to research heart devices

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Plain Dealer Reporter

University Hospitals Case Medical Center is joining with one of Europe's top contract research organizations to speed the worldwide development of heart-related devices and therapies.

UH and Cardialysis BV, the contract research organization in Rotterdam, Netherlands, plan to start Cardialysis Cleveland. Terms of the joint research agreement are still being discussed.

Cardialysis Cleveland would combine the clinical development capabilities of Cardialysis with medical-imaging technologies at UH to help researchers develop and test their cardiovascular innovations.

"All of the important innovations in interventional cardiology are carried out in the context of contract research organizations, or CROs," said Dr. Daniel Simon, chief of cardiovascular medicine at UH.

Cardialysis is the main contract research organization for interventional cardiology in Europe, said Simon, who also is the Herman K. Hellerstein Professor of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine.

Europe leads the United States by about five years in introducing cardiovascular innovations, largely because of the U.S. regulatory structure, he said.

Cardialysis Cleveland would bring the expertise of Dr. Patrick Serruys to Northeast Ohio. He is head of interventional cardiology at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and also works with Cardialysis.

Serruys is one of the world's top interventional cardiologists. "He's a major force," Simon said.

Cardialysis runs clinical trials of heart-related devices and therapies. The Dutch firm provides expert evaluations of medical images used to develop and test the cardiovascular innovations.

UH hosts the Cardiovascular Imaging Core Lab, which is developing novel imaging technologies, such as optical coherence tomography, to help researchers assess clinical trials of cardiovascular devices and drugs.

Cardialysis Cleveland is evidence of a global research trend among interventional cardiologists, Simon said. Cardialysis is going global, opening locations in several countries, including Japan, China and India, he said.

The top cardiovascular contract research organization in the United States, Cardiovascular Research Foundation, also is going global, Simon said.

Researchers may eventually conduct global clinical trials of heart devices, much the same way some drug trials now are conducted, he said.

These worldwide trials could accelerate development of heart technologies that improve patient care.

The Dutch company chose Cleveland as its U.S. home because Serruys of Cardialysis was a doctoral-degree adviser for Dr. Marco Costa, a cardiologist who came to UH about a year ago from the University of Florida. Costa also is a professor at Case Medical School.

"It's a big deal for University Hospitals Case Medical Center, and it's a big deal for Cleveland because

Cardialysis is the Mercedes or BMW of interventional cardiology [contract research organizations], and it could have gone anywhere in the United States," Simon said.

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