



# Innovation at your doorstep...

An illustration of Sheba's new ARC Innovation Center.

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– Dr. Eyal Zimlichman



Eyal Zimlichman (Photos: Sheba Medical Center)

## With Sheba Medical Center's new ARC program, the hospital is collaborating with leading medical institutions worldwide to bring the latest cutting-edge technology to patients

By NOA AMOUYAL

Since the advent of the smartphone, in many ways, every aspect of our lives can be (literally) held in the palm of our hand.

As such, the banking industry, e-commerce and media industries are all coming to the same conclusion as we embark on the last year of this decade: Digital is king and data is the future.

While the healthcare industry may be a bit slow on the uptake, nobody understands this more than Sheba Medical Center-Tel Hashomer.

With its new ARC (Accelerate Redesign Collaborate) Innovation Center, the hospital is revolutionizing how digital health can greatly enhance the care and treatment of patients in Israel and beyond.

"We're putting a big emphasis on digital health and understanding that digital health is going to be

a major tool in health innovation in the next decade," said Dr. Eyal Zimlichman, Deputy Director General, Chief Medical Officer and Chief Innovation Officer at Sheba Medical Center. "There are a lot of unexploited possibilities in digital health technologies, which already exist, but have never really been applied to healthcare. They are used in information telecommunication, banking and other industries, but this can transform healthcare as we know it."

The focus on digital health is one of the four principles governing the ARC Innovation Center's philosophy. The other three – its innovation campus that invites start-up companies to set up shop in the hospital's innovation-friendly ecosystem; fostering international partnerships with leading medical institutions around the world; and constructing a massive 22,000 sq. meter complex (comprised of several buildings) – will give future healthcare minded

entrepreneurs a home away from home at Sheba, and are all part of the hospital's formula for success.

And with the new launch of Triventures, a venture capital fund investing in medical devices and transformational health services, Sheba is now one step ahead of the game.

"This is major news. This is the first time in Israel that any hospital has a venture fund, let alone a government hospital," Dr. Zimlichman, explained. "We're joining a small and exclusive club of medical centers around the world that feature investment funds."

From life sciences to lifestyle, the VC will invest in genomics, healthcare cyber security, e-commerce in health services, wellness, robotics, disruptive medical devices and diagnostics. With more than 500 venture deals reviewed per year, the fund is selecting the best of the best to come out of Silicon Valley and Israel.

With partners like Phillips, Johnson & Johnson and Samsung, Triventures will provide seed investment for start-ups dedicated to being part of the digital healthcare revolution.

It makes sense, then, that this kind of forward thinking is coming out of the Start-up Nation's largest and oldest public hospital.

For a hospital that has been paperless for over a decade, launching such a ground-breaking center and creating a \$45 million VC fund, seems like the next logical step to leverage everything the hospital is already doing.

"In many ways, the ARC program maximizes and leverages everything Sheba (and the Start-up Nation) already has in place, but brings it to another level," Dr. Zimlichman said.

It helps, of course, that Sheba is in the heart of one of the most innovative countries in the world.

Or, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in March when the cabinet approved a national digital health plan, "We are doing something of historic significance. We are developing the industries of

tomorrow. In effect these are the industries of today. They are based on a combination of three things: Very large databases, artificial intelligence and connectivity. This has a greater potential than cyber."

Dr. Zimlichman, too, sees the massive potential of Israel's digital healthcare industry on a collaborative level. "When you live in Israel, and you have so many great start-up companies, this innovation is basically at your doorstep. Many of our partners in the US are aching for start-up companies who want to work with them and we obviously don't have that problem. We have three to four great start-up companies knocking on our door each week looking to work with us. They need us to help them take their work to the next level," he said.

At the heart of the ARC Innovation Center, start-ups will be able to set-up shop, rent office space and have direct access hospital data and clinical sites.

"It will be unique – there isn't anything like it in the world – where it will really bring together everyone. For example, the Ministry of Health will open space, as will the medical corps in the IDF and some

HMOs. It's not really about Sheba, it will be a national and even international hub of digital health innovation," Dr. Zimlichman explained. Surrounding the complex will be other satellite buildings set to open within the next seven to 10 years as part of the hospital's City of the Future program.

Further, considering Israel's most valuable export is its intellectual capital, projects like these are extremely important in cementing Israel's reputation as a hotbed of innovation and combating the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

"Of course, everything that strengthens Israel and makes us more central in the world, hurts the BDS movement. Our value and potential to export innovation to the world is clear. We see international delegations coming to Israel almost every day, we have this reputation and it's important that people know all the good things coming out of Israel," he said.

*This article was written in cooperation with Sheba Medical Center.*