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<b>PUBLICATION:</b>	<b>Egyptian Gazette</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>10-May-2015</b>
<b>COUNTRY:</b>	<b>Egypt</b>
<b>CIRCULATION:</b>	<b>60,000</b>
<b>TITLE :</b>	<b>Medical Briefs: New drugs to treat iron deficiency – Telemedicine available in remote locations</b>
<b>PAGE:</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>ARTICLE TYPE:</b>	<b>General Health News</b>
<b>REPORTER:</b>	<b>Staff Report</b>

# Medical Briefs

## *New drugs to treat iron deficiency*

**MEDICAL** specialists have defined iron deficiency as a frequently unrecognised and under-diagnosed condition that can add substantially to the burden of an underlying disease. Recent reports have shown that the prevalence of iron deficiency in Middle East countries is moderate to severe.

The rise in incidence can be attributed to the Middle East's ineffective iron fortification programme, food interaction and haemoglobin application, which also act as anaemia indicators in these countries.

Contributing to the region's continuous efforts to address iron deficiency is Vifor Pharma, a member of the Galenica Group. Vifor Pharma has revealed its plans to expand its presence in the Middle East with the opening of its first office in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The company is a global leader in the development, production and marketing of innovative products for the treatment of iron deficiency – with or without anaemia, according to Miriam Hakim, the company's Middle East Regional Director.

The company is committed to supporting patients with iron deficiency anaemia by



developing new medicines to improve their lives.

## *Telemedicine available in remote locations*

A **CO-OPERATION** protocol has been signed by the Ministries of Health and Communications and Information Technology, for the use of information technology in developing the health system. Health Minister Dr Adel Adawi pointed out that the use of telemedicine was at the top of the priorities agreed upon with the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Khaled Negm.

Dr Adawi confirmed that they had agreed to use the telemedicine system, through video conferencing, at a number of health units in Siwa, Nubia and the New Valley. Through the new system, physicians at these health units could present the patient's case to consultants at various Egyptian universities and university hospitals without the patient having to travel to Cairo or Alexandria, said Dr Adawi.

This would improve the standard of medical services offered to patients in remote locations. The system would also make up for the shortage in brain, neurology and haematology specialists at these locations, according to Dr Adawi.