GREENVILLE, S.C. — Greenville Health System and Clemson University announced a partnership Tuesday to conduct medical research.

The deal allows Clemson access to the Greenville hospital's doctors and patients for clinical trials and the hospital gets the administrative structure and expertise with research that Clemson can provide.

Areas where the university and hospital plan to concentrate include fighting cancer, improving rehabilitation techniques for older people and making health care more affordable through remote diagnosis.

Research done by the university and the hospital can have immediate impact not just in the Upstate, but nationwide, officials said.

Clemson University President Jim Barker joined Greenville Health System CEO Mike Riordan for the announcement.

Barker said he expects the partnership will allow Clemson to double its health care research funding in four years.

"We believe this collaboration will provide additional opportunities to the increasing number of students interested in health and support faculty recruitment in biological sciences, public health, bioengineering and biomedical sciences," Barker said in a statement.

Riordan says it made sense for the Greenville hospital to find a partner to do more than it could have done alone.

"We think this innovative model will not only benefit the Upstate but could help transform the way health care is delivered nationwide," Riordan said.