sanitas

Press release of 4 May 2021

Sanitas promotes innovation for the detection of premature births

Sanitas is the first health insurer in Switzerland to cover the cost of a preventive check-up with Pregnolia for its customers under a supplementary outpatient insurance plan. That's why Sanitas is investing in Zurich-based start-up Pregnolia AG, which specialises in the early detection of premature births.

There are still a lot of unknown factors in the field of gynaecology and obstetrics. Risk assessments for pregnant women are still rather hit and miss. Premature births are one of the leading causes of neonatal mortality and long-term congenital illnesses worldwide. This is where the measurement system of Pregnolia AG, which specialises in the early detection of premature births, can help. Sanitas is proving its credentials as an innovative health insurer by investing in the ETH Zurich spin-off.

Covering the costs of preventive check-ups
Founded by ETH biomechanist Sabrina Badir, Pregnolia has developed a procedure for the improved risk assessment of premature births by measuring the stiffness of a woman's cervix. The system gained official approval (CE certificate) in 2019. The aim is to use the Pregnolia system to identify asymptomatic women who may benefit from intervention in the early stages of pregnancy. Pregnolia is also working to ensure that, in the future, women are only referred for appropriate treatment if there is an increased risk of premature birth.

At present, this procedure is not a mandatory benefit under the Swiss Federal Health Insurance Act (KVG/HIA); the necessary studies for inclusion are currently under way in Switzerland and internationally.

However, Sanitas is the first health insurer in Switzerland to reimburse the cost of the Pregnolia test for customers who have supplementary outpatient insurance (Classic, Family, Jump). The system is currently used in selected practices and hospitals.

Sanitas as a strategic investor
Sanitas CEO Dr Andreas Schönenberger: The partnership with Pregnolia AG is perfectly aligned with our company values: "straightforward", "innovative" and "collaborative". Sanitas is constantly expanding its partnerships with professional and innovative start-ups and also funding promising innovations in the healthcare sector. This is always done with the aim of making access to Sanitas and the healthcare system even easier and more convenient for its customers.

Dr Sabrina Badir, CEO and founder of Pregnolia: "We're delighted that Sanitas is supporting our start-up as we ready the product for broad market release and that, by reimbursing check-ups done using our technology, it is sending out a strong signal for innovation in the market."

About Sanitas
The Sanitas Group (www.sanitas.com) runs both a basic insurance (Sanitas Grundversicherungen AG and Compact Grundversicherungen AG) and supplementary insurance business (Sanitas Privatversicherungen AG). With around 841,000 customers and a premium volume of almost three billion Swiss francs, Sanitas is one of the biggest health insurers in Switzerland.

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