

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7:00AM GST, 21 OCTOBER 2026

Department of Health – Abu Dhabi and ŌURA Launch Research Partnership to Study Early Warning Signs of Premature Birth

- *Project CRADLE is a first-of-its-kind 24-month pilot study that will examine whether continuous wearable data can help predict spontaneous premature birth*
- *The study will lay the groundwork for predictive models that health systems could use to improve outcomes for mothers and babies*

ABU DHABI, UAE — October 21, 2026 — [Department of Health – Abu Dhabi](#) (DoH) and [ŌURA](#), a leading health intelligence platform and maker of the world’s smallest smart ring, today announced Project CRADLE (Capturing Risk And Detecting Labor signals in Elevated-risk pregnancies), a 24-month pilot study to research how biometric data from wearable technology can reveal early warning signs of spontaneous premature birth.

Announced by H.E. Dr. Noura Khamis Al Ghaithi, Undersecretary of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi and ŌURA CEO Tom Hale at the Abu Dhabi Future Health Summit, Project CRADLE is the first live research initiative in the long-term partnership between DoH and ŌURA, previously announced in May 2026, to study how continuous wearable data can advance preventative health.

Premature, or preterm, birth is when a baby is born before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy, and can occur spontaneously or following medical intervention. It affects roughly [1 in 10 births worldwide](#), accounting for [millions of births every year](#), and remains one of the most unpredictable complications in pregnancy. Today, clinicians largely rely on symptoms and medical history, but identifying risks earlier in pregnancy could allow care teams to intervene sooner, ensure families are within reach of the right care, and help protect the health of mothers and babies.

Project CRADLE will combine continuous wearable data from Oura Ring with Abu Dhabi’s clinical and genomic data to better understand risk factors around preterm birth. Underpinned by robust data governance, clear ethics approvals and rigorous clinical oversight, this jointly designed study aims to set a structured path from research to real-world application within healthcare systems, including broader integration within Abu Dhabi’s health system, subject to evidence and regulatory approval. The initial healthcare institutions to participate in the pilot will be Corniche Hospital and Mediclinic Airport Road, two of the leading maternal care institutions in Abu Dhabi.

“In Abu Dhabi, we are building an intelligent health system of the future,” said H.E. Dr. Noura Khamis Al Ghaithi, Undersecretary of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi. “Continuous sensing enables a shift from reactive care to healthcare that anticipates risk, detects warning signs sooner, and enables faster, more precise and personalised intervention. Project CRADLE brings this approach to pregnancy and birth, one of the most pivotal moments in life, building the evidence to guide more timely care.”

She continued, “Women's health and fertility are at the heart of Abu Dhabi's health priorities. Our ambition is to become a leading center for reproductive health that is grounded in research that advances care. In the UAE's Year of the Family, we're proud that research carried out in Abu Dhabi could improve lives for mothers, babies, and families here and around the world.”

“For more than a decade, ŌURA has pioneered the science of what continuous physiological data can reveal about a person's health,” said Tom Hale, CEO of ŌURA. “Project CRADLE shows what could be possible when a forward-thinking health system combines clinical excellence with accurate, continuous monitoring. We're proud to work alongside a health authority setting that standard, improving outcomes for families in the Emirate, and creating pathways that can be used across the world to improve health.”

Five months after [signing their Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#), DoH and ŌURA have moved from vision to active research, delivering on their commitment to pilot design, ethics approval, and local evidence generation. Project CRADLE is the first of three pilots focused on preventative health research, with a primary focus on women's health and cardiometabolic health. It is part of Abu Dhabi's prevention-led, data-driven health agenda which brings together Abu Dhabi's intelligent health system, population-scale health and genomics data, integrated health infrastructure, and policy to accelerate population health research, where new models of care can be safely designed, validated, and scaled.

About Project CRADLE

Population-level research suggests that biometrics such as [heart rate and heart rate variability shift in the weeks before delivery](#). Project CRADLE is designed to test whether such shifts can be detected for an individual woman. The study will commence in the coming weeks and will follow an Abu Dhabi-based sample of women with elevated-risk pregnancies who choose to wear Oura Ring from early pregnancy through delivery.

During the study, Oura Ring will continuously track biometrics, such as heart rate, heart rate variability, sleep and activity, which researchers will pair with clinical outcomes to build a longitudinal, labeled dataset. The study will investigate whether a reliable physiological signal appears before spontaneous preterm labor in an individual woman. It will also assess whether that signal could define a clinically actionable threshold — early enough for care teams to give treatments that support improved baby outcomes, such as lung and brain health, or to arrange transfer to specialist neonatal care.

The jointly designed research will be conducted as an IRB-approved study, within DoH's data governance and Trusted Research Environment framework, with participants' informed consent and standard clinical care throughout. ŌURA's team of more than 50 in-house M.D.s and Ph.D.s will lead the wearable data science and analysis. ŌURA will partner with multiple leading health providers in Abu Dhabi to run the study, including Corniche Hospital and Mediclinic Airport Road, enabling participant recruitment alongside providing the highest level of care. Results are expected to be published in 2028.

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About the Department of Health –Abu Dhabi (DoH):

The Department of Health – Abu Dhabi is the regulative body of the healthcare sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Committed to ensuring excellence in healthcare, DoH monitors the health status of the population while shaping the regulatory framework for the health system. This includes inspecting against regulations, enforcing standards and encouraging the adoption of world-class best practices and performance targets by all healthcare providers in the Emirate. Abu Dhabi remains dedicated to shaping the future of healthcare by establishing an intelligent and sustainable ecosystem that prioritises health, longevity and quality of life for all community members. Leveraging state-of-the-art infrastructure and cutting-edge capabilities, DoH continues to develop and implement initiatives and programmes in line with its strategic focus areas, Healthy Population, Best-in-Class Care and Resilience and Innovation. These efforts reflect DoH's unwavering commitment to predicting, preventing and personalising healthcare for every individual.

For further information on DOH, visit <https://www.doh.gov.ae/> and follow on X, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube.

About ŌURA

ŌURA is a health intelligence platform designed to transform how people understand and manage their health in everyday life. ŌURA's platform is anchored by Oura Ring, the world's leading smart ring that helps you live healthier, longer. ŌURA supports millions of members worldwide across sleep, activity, stress, readiness, women's health, metabolic health, and heart health. Scientifically validated against medical gold standards, the lightweight Oura Ring tracks 50+ health metrics continuously, empowering both individuals and thousands of research teams, healthcare providers, sports teams, and organizations. Trusted by an ecosystem of more than 1,200 partners, ŌURA is advancing the future of preventative health with privacy and security at the forefront.

Founded in Finland in 2013, ŌURA is headquartered in San Francisco with E.U. headquarters in Oulu, Finland.

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