## **Grants for Hospitals**

Modernising medical equipment entails a considerable financial burden, which hospitals find difficult to bear, especially in the current time of crisis when the public health budgets are constantly cut.

Fondazione Roma has been issuing grants to local hospitals for quite some time, for the purpose of ensuring that they are provided with advanced technology equipment and that citizens may enjoy a quality healthcare system, capable of meeting the demand and reducing waiting lists.

This is a substantial undertaking for the Foundation, which in recent years has allocated over thirty million euro for this purpose. Public and private non-profit healthcare facilities (such as the Local Health Services, General Hospitals, University Polyclinics and Research Hospitals) were able to, and still may, modernize or increase their diagnostic, medical and surgical equipment, accomplish bedside technology projects and purchase high technology machinery and innovative robotic devices.

## Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital

Bambino Gesù is the largest children's hospital and paediatric research centre in Europe. Connected to leading international facilities in this sector, over a million medical procedures are performed per year.

The Paediatric Rehabilitation Unit is the national reference for the most complex cases and MARLab (Movement analysis and Robotics Laboratory) located in Santa Marinella is the largest paediatric rehabilitation facility in Central and Southern Italy, rated excellent at an international level.

The grant issued in 2014 by Fondazione Roma, as recommended by the Chairman, who has long since been convinced that robotics may considerably improve the quality of life for patients with motor issues, enabled MARLab to acquire 'Lokomat' the robot assisted walking therapy.

This is a sophisticated cutting edge device, used in the most advanced international centres to rehabilitate children with gait impairments secondary to neurological injuries and improve their ability to walk. An exoskeleton robotic frame, attached by straps to the outside of the child's legs, moves them in a natural walking pattern. A computer controls the pace of walking and measures the body's response to the movement.

By using Lokomat, in addition to other equipment already available, the Laboratory is capable of providing over two thousand robotic rehabilitation sessions per year.

Considering the project's high social value and impact, the Foundation has decided to continue to cooperate with the Bambino Gesù hospital, by focusing on the latest generation robotic systems for the functional recovery of arm and hand actions, since motor deficits of the upper limbs are one of the main childhood disabilities, which severely restrict their self-sufficiency, school attendance and social involvement.