The Center for Persons with Disabilities recently hosted Dr. Mohamed Knidiri, the former Minister of Education for the Kingdom of Morocco, to discuss plans for a specialized neuro-rehabilitation center in Marrakech City, Morocco and the possibility of collaboration.

Knidiri, who is currently the president of the Private University of Marrakech and president of Association Le Grand Atlas, a non-governmental organization (NGO), is a highly regarded researcher in neuroplasticity. He has formally invited the CPD to collaborate with his proposed rehabilitation facility, and hopes that some of his staff will be able to obtain visas to come to the CPD to learn from the professionals here.

Dr. Bryce Fifield, director of the CPD, welcomed Knidiri, saying, “We are so honored to have you visit. We’re delighted to have you at the CPD.”

CPD researchers Vonda Jump and Mark Innocenti, CPD assistant director Cyndi Rowland, and Vicki Simonsmeier from the clinical services division also attended the meeting.

Knidiri hopes to raise $5 million over the next two years to build the first neuro-rehabilitation facility on the African continent. His clinic is currently housed in donated space in a medical center in Marakesh. It began operations in June of this year, treating 50 patients with a wide range of conditions including stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and children with congenital neurological conditions.

“The main reason we are here is cooperation and exchange of ideas,” Knidiri said. “We need partnerships to make it larger, and I hope we will have the chance to work together.”