

MEDIA & INVESTOR RELEASE

Novartis launches first-of-its-kind not-for-profit portfolio of medicines for symptomatic treatment of COVID-19

- *Portfolio of 15 generic and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines from Sandoz division addresses urgent unmet needs of low- and lower-middle-income countries to treat patients with COVID-19 symptoms*
- *Portfolio will be sold at zero-profit to governments in up to 79¹ eligible countries during the pandemic and until a vaccine or curative treatment is available*
- *Early access to treatment for managing COVID-19 symptoms is critical to preventing healthcare system overload*

Basel, July 16, 2020 — Today, Novartis announced a new initiative to help patients in low-income and lower-middle-income countries (LIC; LMIC) access affordable medicines to treat the major symptoms of COVID-19 – a critical need in the absence of a vaccine or curative treatment. Inflammation and respiratory problems linked to COVID-19 can cause severe medical complications and can lead to death in some people, putting immense strain on fragile healthcare systems.

The Novartis COVID-19 portfolio includes 15 medicines from its Sandoz division for gastrointestinal illness, acute respiratory symptoms, pneumonia as well as septic shock. The medicines were chosen based on clinical relevance and availability to ensure demand can be met globally.

The medicines will be made available to governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other institutional customers in up to 79 eligible countries at zero-profit to support financially-strained healthcare systems. Countries will have the flexibility to select the medicines in the portfolio that meet their healthcare needs. Eligible countries must be included on the World Bank's list of LICs & LMICs¹.

“Access to medicine can be a challenge for patients in low- and lower-middle-income countries and the situation has worsened during COVID-19. With our COVID-19 portfolio, we wish to help address the additional healthcare demands of the pandemic in the countries we are targeting,” said Dr Lutz Hegemann, Chief Operating Officer for Global Health at Novartis.

“This initiative builds on our earlier global commitment to keep prices stable for a basket of essential drugs used to treating COVID-19 patients,” said Sandoz CEO Richard Saynor. “The COVID-19 Response Portfolio for low-income and lower-middle-income countries is designed to support governments in treating COVID-19 symptoms before they lead to complications in patients.”

The following medicines are included in the Novartis COVID-19 Response Portfolio: Amoxicillin, Ceftriaxone, Clarithromycin, Colchicine, Dexamethasone, Dobutamine, Fluconazole, Heparin, Levofloxacin, Loperamide, Pantoprazole, Prednisone, Prednisolone, Salbutamol, Vancomycin.

The portfolio will be offered in addition to the Novartis Access portfolio (on- and off-patent medicines against key non-communicable diseases) via the local Novartis or Sandoz affiliate.

This global pandemic has placed extreme pressure on healthcare systems in low- and lower-income countries. The pandemic response portfolio complements the previously launched Novartis COVID-19 Response Fund to support healthcare workers and communities in over 50 projects around the world.

The COVID-19 medicines portfolio is Novartis latest contribution to the global effort to combat the pandemic and support the stability of global healthcare systems. The company has committed to donating USD 40 million to support communities around the world impacted by the pandemic. In addition, Novartis has been active in two key cross-industry research initiatives, the COVID-19 Therapeutics Accelerator, coordinated by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Wellcome, and Mastercard, as well as a COVID-19 directed partnership organized by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI). Novartis continues to provide hydroxychloroquine for ongoing investigator-initiated trials (IITs) and upon government requests, as appropriate. The company is also separately supporting COVID-19 related clinical investigations of several Novartis medicines. To support access, the Novartis generics and biosimilars division Sandoz became the first company to commit to keeping stable prices for a basket of essential medicines that may help in the treatment of COVID-19 and entered into a partnership with US-based Civica Rx to support stable supply of essential generic hospital medicines. Furthermore, AveXis, Novartis gene therapy unit, entered into a manufacturing agreement with Massachusetts Eye and Ear and Massachusetts General Hospital to produce its novel genetic COVID-19 vaccine candidate called AAVCOVID. More information about the Novartis response to COVID-19 is available on <https://novartis.com/coronavirus>

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