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MPP-Gilead pact on HIV drug 'is an opportunity for Indian pharma cos'

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, July 24

Drugmakers in India and China will be able to develop generically similar versions of tenofovir alafenamide, a HIV drug undergoing its finals (TAF) stages of testing on humans.

The development follows a new licensing agreement between the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) and the US-based Gilead Sciences on the drug.

The announcement was made at the AIDS 2014 conference in Melbourne on Thursday. The licence will allow manufacturers in India and China to develop generic versions of TAF for 112 countries that are home to more than 92 per cent of people living with HIV in the developing world, a note from the United Nations-backed MPP said.

The Gilead-MPP agreement aims to fast-track the production of low-cost versions of TAF for low- and middle-income countries soon after its approval in the US, Greg Perry, Executive Director, MPP, said in a statement.

The medicine is currently being studied by Gilead Sciences in Phase III clinical trials for the treatment of HIV as part of a single tablet regimen and as a standalone treatment for chronic hepatitis B in adults.

The new licence expands MPP's existing collaboration with Gilead Sciences for the production of tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF), emtricitabine, cobicistat, and elvitegravir, as well as a single tablet regimen of all four anti-AIDS drugs.

Amendments to the 2011 agreement allow manufacturers in China to produce generic versions of these drugs.

It also provides for technology transfer of TAF to sub-licensees in India, the note said.

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