

Cipla mulls new healthcare fund

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Cipla, the domestic pharmaceuticals major, is tweaking its business model, keeping a strong focus on its new business, Cipla New Ventures (CNV).

The new investment arm is shifting focus into a venture capital way of investment, with plans of raising a new fund under CNV. According to the management, CNV has got a lot of interest from investors who want to join hands to launch a new health care fund. However, the legal structure of the fund is not yet defined.

"Our plan is to create a new business for Cipla with a size of today's Cipla in the next 10 years," said Chandru Chawla, head of CNV. Cipla had appointed Chawla as head of New Venture a year ago. He joined Cipla in 2011 in the international business division, having worked in Lupin and Wockhardt, and took charge of CNV a year before.

Cipla has already made four investments through the investment arm, in Stempeutics, Chase Pharma, MabPharma and BioMab.

"As of now, we have three

incubators under CNV — Ciptec, Biologicals and Consumer Healthcare. However, we keep expanding into newer areas which will suit Cipla's business opportunities," he said.

This is a first of its kind in India, where a pharma company is taking on a strategic investor's role to nurture smaller companies across the globe. "Every day, we are getting two-three enquiries, with interest for co-investments in

Company's new investment arm getting a lot of interest from other investors for this segment

various health care and pharma companies. We're seriously considering those," said Chawla.

He said Cipla planned to launch a new fund where outside investors can participate.

"It's too early to disclose the nature of the fund. Cipla might act as anchor investor and bring outside investors or it might be a joint venture," he said.

Last year, the biotech industry in India had formed a new angel investors' group, termed Biotech Angel Network, in line with other such groups like the Indian Angel Network and Mumbai Angel Network, under ABLE (Association of Biotechnology-Led Enterprises).

Company