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ICMR fast tracks roll out of global solidarity trial by WHO

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â??Solidarityâ?? is an international clinical trial to compare four treatment options against standard of care to assess their relative effectiveness against COVID-19



The Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has fast tracked the roll out of the global 'Solidarity' trial launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) to help in finding an effective treatment for COVID-19.

'Solidarity' is an international clinical trial to compare four treatment options against standard of care to assess their relative effectiveness against COVID-19. By enrolling patients in multiple countries, the Solidarity trial aims to rapidly discover whether any of the drugs slow disease progression or improve survival. Importantly, this initiative provides for both speed and scale.

Speaking about India's participation in this global endeavor, Prof (Dr) Balram Bhargava, Secretary Department of Health Research and Director General ICMR said, "ICMR is working relentlessly to implement scientific interventions to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to join the WHO solidarity trial is an important step in this endeavor."

"The ICMR-National AIDS Research Institute (NARI) is the national coordination site for the trial in India. Four potential anti-viral agents, Remdesivir, Chloroquine/Hydroxychloroquine, Lopinavir-Ritonavir and Lopinavir-Ritonavir with Interferon (?1a) are to be trial," he added.

Welcoming India's participation in the WHO global solidarity trial Dr Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India said, "We congratulate the Government of India, particularly ICMR for joining the global Solidarity trial. Through this collaboration, Indian researchers and institutions will participate in a global initiative to find effective treatment options for Covid-19. India plays a critical role in both research as well as in manufacturing once trials conclude successfully. WHO India is extending the required support to conduct the trial in India."

The trial has begun recruiting COVID-19 patients in the country. Elaborating on the progress, Dr Sheela Godbole, Senior Scientist, NARI and National Coordinator for the Solidarity trial in India said, "The required regulatory and ethical approvals have already been obtained and clinical trial sites have started to recruit patients in the trial." Till now total 9 sites have been approved.

The Solidarity trial provides simplified procedures to enable even overloaded hospitals to participate. Over 100 countries have requested participation to find effective therapeutics as soon as possible, via the trial. multiple countries will ensure time. This will help fast-track disease.

The participation of multiple clinical trial units/hospitals in adequate enrollment of participants in the shortest possible identification of correct treatment options for the COVID-19 disease.