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Novartis introduces novel medicine portfolio for COVID-19

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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



Swiss firm Novartis has 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 gastro-intestinal 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 & LMICs.

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.