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Price reduction for expanding access to highly effective MDR tuberculosis treatment

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Pretomanid, used within the BPaL and BPaLM regimens, is already being piloted and implemented in operational research programmes run by government agencies and civil society organisations

Viatris, a global healthcare company headquartered in the US, MedAccess, and TB Alliance have announced a new agreement to reduce the price of pretomanid, a drug used to treat multidrug-resistant (MDR) tuberculosis (TB), by 34%.

Pretomanid is part of two new treatment regimens with high efficacy and shorter treatment durations recently recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the preferred regimens for most drug-resistant tuberculosis patients.

Pretomanid (Pa) is used in combination with bedaquiline (B), linezolid (L), and sometimes moxifloxacin (M) to form BPaL and BPaLM – six-month, all-oral treatment regimens, found to be effective at curing 89-91% MDR-TB patients.

In July 2020, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) had approved the TB drug pretomanid (developed specifically for certain drug-resistant forms of the disease) for conditional access under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP), making India the second country in the world to provide regulatory approval for this product.

A volume guarantee to be provided by MedAccess to Viatris will see the ceiling price of pretomanid reduced to $240 Ex Works per six-month treatment course. It will help to bring both BPaL and BPaLM substantially closer to $500 per patient course.

Governments and global procurers are expected to make direct savings of $15.6 million thanks to the guarantee, with additional savings for national healthcare budgets as they care for fewer patients with long-term MDR-TB.

The new ceiling price will be available to more than 140 governments, and NGOs and public sector procurers purchasing pretomanid in those countries.