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Hyderabad-based PopVax wins $2 M to accelerate development of influenza vaccine

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PopVax is developing the vaccine in collaboration with Germanyâ??s LTS Lohmann



PopVax, a Hyderabad-based biotechnology startup developing broadly-protective mRNA vaccines using machine learning-enabled computational protein design, has been awarded $2 million by the United States Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) as one of the winners of the Concept Stage of BARDA's Patch Forward Prize for its seasonal influenza vaccine built on a novel mRNA-encoded immunogen display architecture delivered via dissolvable microarray patch.

PopVax is developing this vaccine in partnership with Germany's LTS Lohmann Therapie-Systeme AG (LTS), a leading player in transdermal drug delivery.

The Patch Forward Prize is a multi-stage $50 million competition launched by BARDA to accelerate the development of microneedle patch-based RNA vaccines for COVID-19, seasonal influenza, and pandemic influenza.

PopVax intends to use the award it has received to accelerate the development of its influenza vaccine programmes, including its broadly-protective influenza vaccine intended to protect against all key seasonal and pandemic strains in a single shot, leveraging both the LTS microarray patch technology and other delivery modalities.

PopVax & LTS Lohmann are now working to advance the self-administered patch-delivered seasonal influenza vaccine into preclinical studies this quarter. PopVax's next-generation COVID-19 vaccine candidate has been selected for a Phase I trial conducted & sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is expected to begin in Q2 2025. The company has six novel vaccine candidates in its preclinical pipeline, and intends to initiate five clinical trials over the next two years.