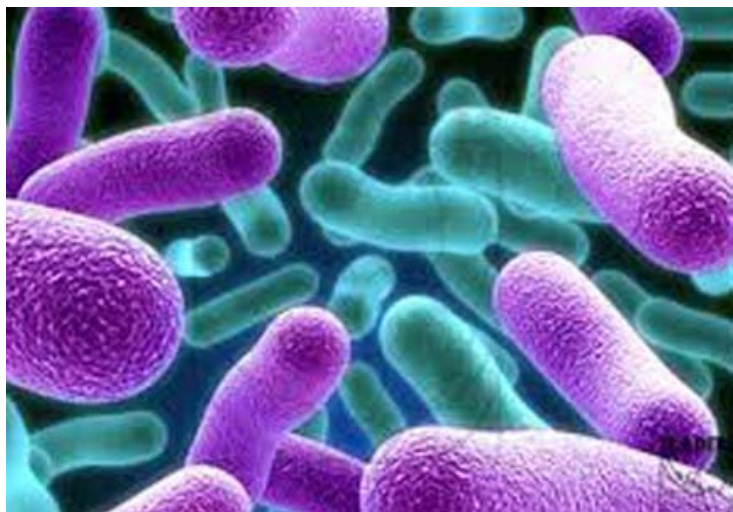


Sphaera Pharma, THSTI & Wellcome Trust to jointly develop drug for resistant TB

23 July 2015 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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Sphaera Pharma (India), a subsidiary of Sphaera Pharma (Singapore), and the Drug Discovery Research Centre (DDRC) of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) have received funding from The Wellcome Trust to develop a novel, first-in-class, therapeutic for the treatment of multiple drug resistant (MDR) and extensively drug resistant (XDR) tuberculosis (TB).

This is based on a unique approach, first identified at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), that targets a host protein. The approach has the potential to be more effective, and is less likely to result in development of drug-resistance. It is also expected to work in conjunction with current therapies.

The incidence of MDR and XDR TB are on the rise and current treatments are not very effective, with long treatment regimens and significant side effects. Hence there is urgent need for the development of new anti-TB drugs that are cheaper, easily available, more effective and require a shorter treatment period. India also has one of the world's highest burden of tuberculosis with approximately 66,000 MDR-TB (Multiple Drug Resistant TB) cases among notified pulmonary TB cases in 2011.

Dr Sundeep Dugar, CEO, Sphaera Pharma Singapore, has indicated that this novel approach through the collaboration between Sphaera Pharma, India, DDRC and Wellcome Trust has the potential to deliver a first-in-class novel therapy for TB.