

Sun Pharma, ICMR ink deal to eradicate malaria

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Bengaluru: In a bid to end the menace of malaria in the country, The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has inked a deal with Sun Pharma to jointly undertake malaria control and establish a national framework for elimination of malaria from the country.

This first-of-its-kind public-private-partnership between ICMR, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India (GoI), Government of Madhya Pradesh and Sun Pharma aims at setting-up management and technical committees to provide oversight for disease surveillance & elimination.

The team will establish a malaria elimination demonstration project titled 'Malaria Free India', and the demonstration project will be launched in one of the most malaria endemic districts of Madhya Pradesh and implemented in a phased manner, beginning with Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh.

"The first of its kind public-private-agreement between ICMR and Sun Pharma reiterates India's commitment to eliminate malaria," said Mr J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, "ICMR and Sun Pharma will aim to reduce the morbidity and mortality caused by malaria in this demonstration project as well as prevention of re-introduction of malaria. The lessons learned would be used for elimination of malaria from the country by the national program."

Dr Soumya Swaminathan, director general, Indian Council of Medical Research, said, "I am pleased that ICMR is partnering with Sun Pharma in a malaria elimination demonstration project - a high priority for us. This project aims to demonstrate that it is feasible to eliminate malaria from a high endemic district, and will hopefully become a pathfinder for the rest of the country. It is also a unique model of collaboration between the central and state governments, a private pharma company and ICMR, and could pave the way for more private investment in public health."

Sun Pharma's managing director, Mr Dilip Shanghvi, said, "Through this program we aim to achieve zero malaria incidences in more than 1,200 villages of Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh by FY21. The experience gained from Mandla project will guide the development of broader plans for malaria elimination in Madhya Pradesh as well as other high malaria endemic states in India."