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GSK grants exclusive technology license to Sabin for Ebola vaccines

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Transfer from GSK and partnership with NIAID will enable Sabin to advance development of the candidate vaccines



GSK and the Sabin Vaccine Institute (Sabin) has announced exclusive agreements for Sabin to advance the development of the prophylactic candidate vaccines against the deadly Ebola Zaire, Ebola Sudan and the closely related, but lesser known, Marburg virus. No licensed vaccines against these three viruses are currently available. All three cause hemorrhagic fever with subsequent death in an average of 50 percent of cases.

More than 1,600 people have already died during the ongoing Ebola Zaire outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), leading the World Health Organization (WHO) to recently declare it a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

Under the agreements between GSK and Sabin, Sabin has exclusively licensed the technology for all three candidate vaccines and acquired certain patent rights specific to these vaccines. The three candidate vaccines were initially developed collaboratively by the U.S. National Institutes of Health and Okairos, which was acquired by GSK in 2013. The candidate vaccines, based on GSK's proprietary ChAd3 platform, were further developed by GSK, including the Phase II development for the Ebola Zaire vaccine.

Amy Finan, Sabin Chief Executive Officer commented, "As an organization committed to improving lives through immunization, Sabin is dedicated to preventing devastating outbreaks of the Ebola and Marburg viruses. Thanks to GSK's longstanding engagement in global health, as well as its scientific expertise, the ChAd3 vaccine program is well positioned to be an effective weapon in the global community's arsenal against Ebola. Sabin appreciates GSK's years of work to advance the ChAd3 Ebola program and the productive partnership the two organizations have established. Sabin plans to continue the development and seek regulatory approval of Ebola and Marburg vaccines with our shared goal of making them available to the millions of people potentially at risk."

Thomas Breuer, Chief Medical Officer of GSK Vaccines, said: "These agreements with the Sabin Vaccine Institute are an important next step in the fight against Ebola and Marburg viruses. Enabling Sabin to build on the scientific progress GSK has delivered up to Phase II increases the likelihood these candidate vaccines may help prevent potential future outbreaks, and exemplifies GSK's approach to global health vaccines which supports partners in taking forward our innovations in a sustainable way. I am proud of the work that our world-leading vaccines scientists at GSK have contributed so far to the development of these vaccine candidates, including the Ebola Zaire candidate vaccine which has demonstrated encouraging results in studies to date."

To further develop the ChAd3 Ebola and Marburg vaccines, Sabin has entered into a Research Collaboration Agreement with the Vaccine Research Center (VRC) at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). The ChAd3-based vaccines against Ebola Zaire, Ebola Sudan, and Marburg viruses have demonstrated a strong safety profile and encouraging immunogenicity results after being administered to more than 5,000 adults and 600 children, in 13 different clinical trials to date.

Specifically, the majority of the clinical volunteers were tested using the ChAd3 Ebola Zaire vaccine. In addition to numerous Phase I trials, the Ebola Zaire vaccine has been tested in three Phase II trials in Africa; two trials were conducted by GSK and one was conducted by the Partnership for Research on Ebola Virus in Liberia (PREVAIL), a clinical research partnership between NIAID and the Liberian Ministry of Health. The Ebola Sudan vaccine has been evaluated in three Phase I trials in Africa and the United States as a bivalent formulation with Ebola Zaire and will be evaluated in an upcoming Phase I study as monovalent formulation. A Phase I study of the Marburg vaccine is ongoing in the United States.