



MEDIA ALERT

Next Generation OZ (synthetic peroxide) awarded MMV Project of the Year 2006

Kampala, Uganda. 7 May 2007. At its stakeholders' meeting today, Medicines for Malaria Venture presented MMV Project of the Year Award 2006 to the Product Development Team (PDT) of one of its discovery projects researching a new generation of synthetic peroxide. This class of compounds holds the exciting potential to offer a breakthrough in the treatment of malaria. The PDT is chaired by Professor Jonathan Vennerstrom of the University of Nebraska (USA) and Professor William Charman of Monash University, Melbourne (Australia).

This is the second MMV Project of the Year award given to this class of compounds – the first was awarded in 2002 for the first-generation synthetic peroxide programme.

Today, artemisinin combination therapies (ACTs) are the most effective treatment for uncomplicated malaria. Uptake in endemic countries has been on the rise and more people have access to this life-saving medicine. In the combination, the artemisinin component provides fast acting, highly effective parasite clearance, with its longer-acting partner drug killing any remaining parasites and providing some protection beyond one month post-treatment.

However, the world cannot rely solely on ACTs as the only class of drugs to treat malaria. The potential for the emergence of drug resistance is real. To stay one-step ahead of resistance and have better treatment options ready to replace ACTs, the Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) is building a robust pipeline of new antimalarial drugs.

With lessons learned from the initial lead candidate and having established the unique nature of the compound class, the PDT dedicated its efforts to the "next-generation" synthetic peroxide. In collaboration with MMV and MMV's Expert Scientific Advisory Committee (ESAC), the PDT set its sight on pushing the utility of this novel class of drugs to the highly challenging targets of a single-dose oral cure for patients with uncomplicated *P. falciparum* malaria (and possibly *P. vivax*). Furthermore, an effective, safe and easy dosage could also be a potential prophylactic treatment as well as intermittent preventive treatment in pregnant women and infants (IPTp and IPTi). These efforts are showing promising results and the PDT is hopeful that they will once again be in a position to put forward a lead candidate, with the potential for this unique profile by the end of 2007.

This team, which has remained together since the beginning of the project, is an excellent example of focused and results-driven scientific drug discovery supported by the Product Development Partnership (PDP) model that has proved to be successful in creating synergies and leveraging the best from the private and public sectors.



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