

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Medicines for Malaria Venture launches the COVID Box to stimulate new drug research**

**Box contains a standard set of compounds with known or predicted activity against SARS-CoV2**

*Geneva, 10 June 2020.* MMV contributes to the global hunt for new therapies for the SARS-CoV-2 virus with the launch of the COVID Box. The aim is to catalyse the discovery of drugs for COVID-19 disease by providing researchers with an initial set of 80 marketed drugs or compounds in development with known or predicted activity against the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. An additional 80 compounds will be added to the Box in the coming weeks.

### **MMV's COVID Box: a united front against COVID-19**

In the space of a few months, COVID-19 has infected almost 7 million people and caused over 400,000 deaths, placing unprecedented pressure on healthcare systems and case management. "The spread of COVID-19 threatens to compromise control efforts for other infectious diseases like malaria by jeopardising access to life-saving antimalarial medicines and emergency care," says Dr David Reddy, MMV's CEO. "This pandemic calls for a united front, particularly with regard to research and development of new medicines. MMV has assembled the open access COVID Box to help spearhead such a collaborative response."

### **Accelerating open research on coronaviruses**

The COVID Box will be dispatched on request and free-of-charge to accelerate open research into treatments for COVID-19 and other SARS coronaviruses. In return, recipients will be asked to publish their findings in the public domain to spur open and collaborative research. Scientists are encouraged to use the compounds to enable cross comparison between different assay formats and generate a community consensus on those most interesting for follow-up. MMV's partners are conducting studies on the biological, protein and lung binding activity of the compounds which will be reported in due course and contribute towards an improved evaluation of each compound's potential.

### **Improving pandemic preparedness by sharing data**

Increased air travel and densely concentrated, interconnected populations have made the world more vulnerable to pandemic diseases than ever before. Now more than ever, new, innovative and collaborative approaches are needed to mobilize the potential for discovering new drugs to fight global health emergencies.

In 2019, MMV and DNDi launched [the Pandemic Response Box](#) as a joint contribution towards pandemic preparedness. By providing a standardised set of compounds, MMV's latest initiative, the COVID Box builds on this work and aims to spearhead research against SARS-CoV-2 as well as against future emerging threats.

More details on the box and how to order it can be found on [the COVID Box webpage](#).

### **Notes for editors:**

#### **About MMV:**

[Medicines for Malaria Venture \(MMV\)](#) is a leading product development partnership (PDP) in the field of antimalarial drug research and development. Its mission is to reduce the burden of malaria in disease-endemic countries by discovering, developing and facilitating delivery of new, effective and affordable antimalarial drugs.

Since its foundation in 1999, MMV and partners have built the largest portfolio of antimalarial R&D and access projects ever assembled, have brought forward 11 new medicines and have assumed the access stewardship of a further two. An estimated 2.2 million lives have been saved by these MMV co-developed medicines. MMV's success is based on its extensive partnership network of around 150 active partners including from the pharmaceutical industry, academia and endemic countries.

MMV's vision is a world in which innovative medicines will cure and protect the vulnerable and under-served populations at risk of malaria, and help to ultimately eradicate this terrible disease.

#### **About MMV Open:**

Open innovation is taking drug discovery to the next level. MMV is proud to lead several open initiatives in drug discovery for malaria and neglected diseases. The data, findings and results emanating from these initiatives are as rich as the connections and collaborations they have inspired.

- The [Pandemic Response Box](#) is a collection of 400 diverse drug-like molecules active against bacteria, viruses or fungi.
- The [Pathogen Box](#) contains 400 diverse, drug-like molecules active against neglected diseases.
- The [Malaria Box](#) was a treasure trove of 400 diverse compounds with antimalarial activity made available free of charge until December 2015.
- [Open Source Drug Discovery programme](#) aims to share all information, data and ideas in real time and openly with fellow researchers.

So far, around 700 of MMV's open access boxes have been distributed worldwide and findings from them have led to over 110 publications, adding significantly to the global scientific knowledge base.

#### **For more information:**

Elizabeth Poll  
Director of Communications  
Mobile +41 79 709 59 92  
e-mail: [polle@mmv.org](mailto:polle@mmv.org)

## **MMV Disclaimer**

This document contains certain forward-looking statements that may be identified by words such as 'believes', 'expects', 'anticipates', 'projects', 'intends', 'should', 'seeks', 'estimates', 'future' or similar expressions, or by discussion of, among other things, vision, strategy, goals, plans, or intentions. It contains hypothetical future product target profiles, development timelines and approval/launch dates, positioning statements, claims and actions for which the relevant data may still have to be established. Stated or implied strategies and action items may be implemented only upon receipt of approvals including, but not limited to, local institutional review board approvals, local regulatory approvals, and following local laws and regulations. Thus, actual results, performances or events may differ from those expressed or implied by such statements.

We ask you not rely unduly on these statements. Such forward-looking statements reflect the current views of Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV) and its partner(s) regarding future events, and involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties. MMV accepts no liability for the information presented here, nor for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of this information. Furthermore, MMV accepts no liability for the decisions made by its pharmaceutical partner(s), the impact of any of their decisions, their earnings and their financial status.