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Korea's GC Biopharma receives WHO prequalification for chickenpox vaccine

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BARYCELA is a live attenuated varicella virus vaccine for chicken pox, caused by varicella-zoster virus

GC Biopharma, a leading provider of biopharmaceutical products in South Korea, has announced that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has granted prequalification (PQ) for BARYCELA, GC Biopharma's varicella vaccine.

WHO prequalification decision has made BARYCELA now eligible for procurement by the United Nations agencies, including the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), to be used in national immunisation programmes. BARYCELA is now one of the three PQ vaccines that GC Biopharma has obtained so far along with H1N1 pandemic and seasonal influenza vaccines.

BARYCELA is a live attenuated varicella virus vaccine, containing MAV/06 strain, a virus exclusively attenuated by GC Biopharma. While containing higher amount of virus, this new vaccine, compared to its previous product, shows higher level of product stability. BARYCELA has also proved non-inferior in immunogenicity with an equivalent level of safety to "VARIVAX", an existing prequalified vaccine in the market.

In addition, BARYCELA is being produced in a state-of-the-art aseptic condition from cell culture and virus infection to purification to make it the world's single only varicella vaccine produced without antibiotics.

With the WHO's prequalification decision, MAV/06 strain has moved a step closer to being registered in the WHO Technical Report Series (TRS) along with the previously listed OKA strain. GC Biopharma's next plan is to target global markets with BARYCELA. The strategy is to utilise the global supply network for Suduvax, its existing varicella vaccine.