

Sigma-Tau wins coveted MMV anti-malarial award

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Sigma-Tau wins coveted Medicines for Malaria Project of the Year 2011 award



New Delhi: The project team for Eurartesim, dihydroartemisinin-piperaquine (DHA-PQP), the first novel chemical entity developed by Sigma-Tau was awarded Medicines for Malaria (MMV) Project of the Year 2011. The latter is a non-profit body with significant contribution from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. The award was presented in New Delhi during MMV's international stakeholder meeting.

Representatives of the Italian pharma group, including Professor Trevor Jones, Dr Marco Corsi and Dr Andreas Diedenhofen, accepted the prize and expressed satisfaction on behalf of the entire team for the achievement.

MMV established the 'Project of the Year' award more than a decade ago to recognize the efforts of selected teams working to combat malaria worldwide. Winners are selected by MMV's expert scientific advisory committee, a group of world renowned experts in malaria and drug development.

Having received European Medicines Agency (EMA) approval in 2011, Eurartesim can now be used safely and effectively deployed widely. The first shipment of 160,000 packages of Eurartesim to a malaria-endemic country were delivered to Cambodia in July this year, where it is hoped that the medicine will help delay the development of artemisinin drug resistance emerging in the region.

The drug is already available in Europe and has a series of advantages over other artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs) given that it's easier to administer once-a-day for three days rather than other medicines that need to be taken twice-a-day. Eurartesim offers better and longer protection from new malaria infections as compared to piperaquine, due to the long half-life of the latter.