

Sanofi to develop novel drugs for drug-resistant TB

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Singapore: Sanofi and the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development (TB Alliance) entered a research collaboration to accelerate the discovery and development of novel compounds against tuberculosis (TB), a deadly infectious disease that resulted in almost 1.5 million deaths worldwide in 2010.

Under the agreement, Sanofi and TB Alliance will collaborate to further optimize and develop several novel compounds in Sanofi's library that have demonstrated activity against Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium that causes TB. This includes in-depth research of lead compounds based upon identified chemical derivatives of natural products, which have promising potential to treat all forms of TB, and the chemical optimization of other series of compounds that have been identified as hits through high-throughput screening.

Dr Elias Zerhouni, president, global R&D, Sanofi, said that, "Sanofi's long-standing commitment to delivering treatments for people living with tuberculosis, including the discovery of rifampicin, the gold-standard drug for tuberculosis treatment, as well as the manufacture of TB treatments, continues with this collaboration. By continuing our excellent partnership with the TB Alliance and leveraging our joint resources, we hope to find together new options to fight this dreaded global disease."

Dr Mel Spigelman, president and CEO, TB Alliance, said that, "In working with Sanofi, we seek a common goal, to give patients and physicians significantly more effective treatments for TB and drug-resistant TB. Without new regimens, we cannot stop this global pandemic."

The cost of diagnosing and treating global TB cases between 2009 and 2015 is estimated at \$16.9 billion, with annual costs increasing from \$700 million in 2009 to \$4.4 billion in 2015. Current TB treatments require patients to take multiple antibiotics for six-to-24 months or longer, a treatment that is difficult for many patients to complete, thus leading to noncompliance. This can result in the development of drug-resistant strains and eventually death. The health consequences of TB and reported increases in drug-resistant strains, along with increasing treatment costs underscore the urgent need for new, better and

faster-acting treatments.