

China updates list of key reimbursable medicines

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Singapore: The Chinese Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security recently announced the updation of key list of medicines covered by basic medical insurance schemes. Inclusion on the National Reimbursement Drug List means a drug is accessible via state insurance schemes, making it affordable to people.

The much-anticipated list of reimbursable drugs include 2,535 Western and Chinese medicines, 339 more than the most recent update of the list in 2009, the ministry said. The number of Western-style medicines included rose by 133 to 1,297.

The new list included compounds such as tenofovir disoproxil, a hepatitis B drug sold as Viread by GlaxoSmithKline and Dublin-based drugmaker Shire's haemophilia treatment ADVATE.

Earlier, in January, Reuters had reported that China was set to add more than 300 new and traditional drugs to its list of medicines the state will help patients pay for, a long-awaited boost to drugs for cancer, kidney disease, hepatitis and haemophilia.

The drugs now being part-sponsored by the state government, provides new fillip to global drugmakers, who are currently worried about slow growth rates in the world's second largest pharma market.