BioSpectrum
the business of Bio & Health Sciences
ASIA EDITION

Gilead begins trial for coronavirus drug

February 12, 2020 | News

Clinical trials of Remdesivir begins in Wuhan, China



US based biotech company Gilead is working with health authorities in China to establish a randomized, controlled trial to determine whether remdesivir can safely and effectively be used to treat 2019-nCoV. The company is also expediting appropriate laboratory testing of remdesivir against 2019-nCoV samples.

"Gilead is working closely with global health authorities to respond to the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak through the appropriate experimental use of our investigational compound remdesivir. Together with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the China CDC and National Medical Product Administration (NMPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the U.S. National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and along with individual researchers and clinicians, Gilead is focused on contributing our antiviral expertise and resources to help patients and communities fighting 2019-nCoV, " said Merdad Parsey, MD, PhD, Chief Medical Officer, Gilead Sciences.

Remdesivir is not yet licensed or approved anywhere globally and has not been demonstrated to be safe or effective for any use. At the request of treating physicians, and with the support of local regulatory agencies, who have weighed the risks and benefits of providing an experimental drug with no data in 2019-nCoV, Gilead has provided remdesivir for use in a small number of patients with 2019-nCoV for emergency treatment in the absence of any approved treatment options.

While there are no antiviral data for remdesivir that show activity against 2019-nCoV at this time, available data in other coronaviruses give us hope. Remdesivir has demonstrated *in vitro* and *in vivo* activity in animal models against the viral pathogens MERS and SARS, which are coronaviruses that are structurally similar to 2019-nCoV. There are also limited clinical data available from the emergency use of remdesivir in the treatment of patients with Ebola virus infection.