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Clinical trials for GSK's Ebola vaccine to begin soon

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Singapore: The clinical trials for the experimental Ebola vaccine developed by GlaxoSmithKline in collaboration with the US National Institute of Health (NIH) could begin as early as next week. USFDA had issued a fast-tracked designation for the vaccine candidate, in order to curb the outbreak that is ravaging in five West African countries.

GSK said that this would be the first testing of the vaccine on humans to assess the safety, efficacy and potency of the vaccine. Reports state that health officials from NIH had approved the first step toward using three advanced laboratories in Texas, Maryland and Carolina, to manufacture Ebola vaccines and treatments.

The vaccine candidate by GSK consists of a common cold virus, called an adenovirus, which has been engineered to carry two genes of the Ebola virus. Testing of the vaccines in animals demonstrated that infection with the adenovirus produced proteins that stimulated the immune system to fight against the deadly virus.

With the death toll reaching 1350, health experts across the globe are accelerating the process of vaccine development and approval.