

Chinese Ebola vaccine found effective in human trials

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Singapore: An experimental Ebola vaccine candidate developed by the Beijing Institute of Biotechnology and the Tianjin CanSino Biotechnology has been found to be safe in phase I clinical trials. Mr Fengcai Zhu, lead researcher, said, "On the basis of our findings, we believe that the Ebola vaccine we assessed has some potential."

Mr Zhu further said that the vaccine could be safely stored and transported in tropical areas of Africa with inadequate cold chain capacity. The safety and immunogenicity of the vaccine was evaluated based on 2014 Zaire Guinea Ebola strain, and delivered by a virus-like structure (known as a recombinant adenovirus type-5 vaccine).

The researchers found that 28 days after vaccination, 38 out of 40 participants in the low-dose group and all 40 of those in the high-dose group had a positive immune response to the vaccine, with participants in the high-dose group producing higher quantities of antibodies than those in the low-dose group.

Mr Zhu however said, "Whether this candidate vaccine could become a final vaccine for widespread use against Ebola outbreaks is still uncertain, because of the issues of HIV-1 acquisition rates and the pre-existing immunity, especially in West Africa."