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South Africa secures R500 million saving in MDR-TB drug price says Minister Motsoaledi at international conference in Amsterdam

Pretoria: Health Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi announced that the price for Bedaquiline, a drug used in South Africa for the treatment of multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB), would be reduced from R10 000 to about R5 400 a patient, effective immediately.

According to Minister Motsoaledi, who made this announcement during his opening address at the 22nd International AIDS Conference taking place in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, the price reduction will translate into a saving of close to R500 million for South Africa in just eight months.

South Africa has been at the forefront in the replacement of the injectable phase of treating MDR-TB with Bedaquiline to shorten the treatment regimen for people affected by drug-resistant TB.

The announcement by Minister Motsoaledi, who is also the Chairperson of the Stop TB Partnership Board, which represents numerous international organisations, government programmes, research and funding agencies, NGOs and civil society groups, and the private sector was received with jubilation by many in attendance who would benefit from the reduced price.

According to Paul Stoffels, Vice Chairperson of the Executive Committee and Chief Scientific Officer of Johnson & Johnson, the new price of 400 USD for a six-month course of treatment will be available to all programmes procuring from the Stop TB Partnership's Global Drug Facility.

The Minister called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to urgently update the MDR-TB treatment guidelines to reflect the body of evidence available on the use of Bedaquiline in the treatment of drug resistant TB.

Commenting on the announcement, Stop TB Partnership Executive Director Lucia Ditiu, said: "What an amazing announcement to end this 12-hour marathon meeting on TB. Basically, South Africa has negotiated down the price of Bedaquiline and the world will benefit."

Bedaquiline has been used in South Africa since 2013 and about 15 000 patients have been treated so far.

For enquiries and more information, please contact

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