Beat: Politics

European Commission access to a potential vaccine

BioNTech-Pfizer

Brussels , 12.11.2020, 12:06 Time

USPA NEWS - Coronavirus: Commission approves contract with BioNTech-Pfizer alliance to ensure access to a potential vaccine

Today, the European Commission approved a fourth contract with pharmaceutical companies BioNTech and Pfizer, which provides for the initial purchase of 200 million doses on behalf of all EU Member States, plus an option to request up to a further 100 million doses, to be supplied once a vaccine has proven to be safe and effective against COVID-19. Member States can decide to donate the vaccine to lower and middle-income countries or to re-direct it to other European countries.

Today's contract with the BioNTech-Pfizer alliance builds upon the broad portfolio of vaccines to be produced in Europe, including the already signed a contracts with AstraZeneca, Sanofi-GSK and Janssen Pharmaceutica NV, and the concluded successful exploratory talks with CureVac and Moderna. This diversified vaccines portfolio will ensure Europe is well prepared for vaccination, once the vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective.

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said: “In the wake of Monday's promising announcement by BioNTech and Pfizer on the prospects for their vaccine, I'm very happy to announce today's agreement with the European company BioNTech and Pfizer to purchase 300 million doses of the vaccine. With this fourth contract we are now consolidating an extremely solid vaccine candidate portfolio, most of them in advanced trials phase. Once authorised, they will be quickly deployed and bring us closer to a sustainable solution of the pandemic.“

Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: “A safe and effective vaccine is the only lasting exit strategy from the pandemic, and is at the centre of our European Vaccine Strategy. Today's agreement follows the encouraging first indications from the clinical trial results and is further evidence of our commitment to putting more Europe in the area of health. It is a very telling example of what the EU can achieve when working together, as a Union, and a case in point of what a future European Health Union will be able to deliver.“

BioNTech is a German company working with US-based Pfizer to develop a new vaccine based on messenger RNA (mRNA). mRNA plays a fundamental role in biology, transferring instructions from DNA to cells' protein making machinery. In an mRNA vaccine, these instructions make harmless fragments of the virus which the human body uses to build an immune response to prevent or fight disease.

The Commission has taken a decision to support this vaccine based on a sound scientific assessment, the technology used, the companies' experience in vaccine development and their production capacity to supply the whole of the EU.

Background

The European Commission presented on 17 June a European strategy to accelerate the development, manufacturing and deployment of effective and safe vaccines against COVID-19. In return for the right to buy a specified number of vaccine doses in a given timeframe, the Commission finances part of the upfront costs faced by vaccines producers in the form of Advance Purchase Agreements. Funding provided is considered as a down-payment on the vaccines that will actually be purchased by Member States.

Since the high cost and high failure rate make investing in a COVID-19 vaccine a high-risk decision for vaccine developers, these agreements will therefore allow investments to be made that otherwise might not happen.

Once vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective and have been granted market authorisation by the European Medicines

Agency, they need to be quickly distributed and deployed across Europe. On 15 October, the Commission set out the key steps that Member States need to take to be fully prepared, which includes the development of national vaccination strategies. The Commission is putting in place a common reporting framework and a platform to monitor the effectiveness of national vaccine strategies.

The European Commission is also committed to ensuring that everyone who needs a vaccine gets it, anywhere in the world and not only at home. No one will be safe until everyone is safe. This is why it has raised almost €16 billion since 4 May 2020 under the Coronavirus Global Response, the global action for universal access to tests, treatments and vaccines against coronavirus and for the global recovery and has confirmed its interest to participate in the COVAX Facility for equitable access to affordable COVID-19 vaccines everywhere. As part of a Team Europe effort, the Commission announced is contributing with €400 million in guarantees to support COVAX and its objectives in the context of the Coronavirus Global Response.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-17808/european-commission-access-to-a-potential-vaccine.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Daren Frankish -European Commission

Exemption from liability:
The publisher shall assume no liability for the accuracy or completeness of the published report and is merely providing space for the submission of and access to third-party content. Liability for the content of a report lies solely with the author of such report. Daren Frankish -European Commission

Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619