

Ebola drug trial identifies two strong performers

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WHO would like to truly welcome the results of the study, and extends our congratulations to all the partners who worked so diligently over the years to make this outcome possible on behalf of the millions of people in North Kivu and Ituri who are potentially at risk, and the thousands of frontline workers who toil every day, and on behalf of our over 600 WHO staff in the frontline.

As others have said, this success is built on the hard work of many frontline workers and organizations, not least of which are the Congolese doctors and nurses who've taken the brunt of the work, have learnt so much, and applied themselves so well, both in improving supportive care for patients and in operating the trial. Again, our thanks go to ALIMA, to MSF and to IMC for their amazing support in the frontline to those Congolese workers.

This is the first-ever multi drug trial for Ebola. It has been implemented in a very difficult setting. At the moment we have had over 2800 cases of Ebola. Today over 100 people are in-patients in a large number of Ebola treatment units across the two provinces. Maintaining those treatment units, the higher standards of care, has been a challenge, and one that has required the cooperation of many agencies to be able to deliver. And those unseen heroes - the logisticians, the cleaners, the guards, and others - who provide the infrastructure within which the doctors and nurses have been able to deliver these drugs in such an effective manner.

The success is clear, but there's also a tragedy linked to this success. The tragedy is that not enough people are being treated. We are still seeing too many people staying away from Ebola treatment units, too many people not coming to hospital or not being found in time to benefit from these therapies.

We are seeing outstanding results for those individuals who reach care early. The results for those who don't reach care, or who reach care very late are still very poor. And they are reflected in the large number of deaths we've seen in this outbreak.

So we must move forward to implement the outcomes of this research. We will continue to conduct rigorous research with our partners. We'll incorporate those findings into the outbreak response through a variety of prevention and control strategies.

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Today's news of collective efforts that have advanced scientific efforts to better treat Ebola puts us one step forward to saving more lives.