

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Proteon Pharmaceuticals, the parent company of Vetphage Pharmaceuticals, joins Efforts to Fight Coronavirus**

- **Coronavirus has affected more than 4,70,000 people in the world and caused 21, 344 deaths**
- **Global lockdowns have been effective in arresting movement but to beat these epidemic countries need to ramp up testing**
- **WHO has asked countries to adopt its FITT strategy which is Find, Isolate, Test and Treat to put a stop to this outbreak?**

**Mumbai, March 26, 2020:** Poland based biotechnology major Proteon Pharmaceuticals has joined efforts to fight the Covid 19 pandemic by tying up with leading research institutions of that country to set up new SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus Detection Centre in Lodz, Poland. The new research facility will fast track the disease testing process in order to significantly improve the number of test conducted. Eventually it will result in fast diagnosis and stopping the Coronavirus spread.

The new SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus Detection Centre in Lodz, Poland has been established to conduct large-scale tests for virus diagnosis. The new laboratory was created at a very fast pace with the involvement and cooperation of the Institute of Medical Biology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the University of Lodz, the Medical University of Lodz and Proteon Pharmaceuticals. It is staffed by a team of microbiologists, geneticists, doctors and experts, including scientists from Proteon. The goal is to conduct as many tests as possible in the shortest possible time to fast track the entire process of diagnosis, isolation and treatment.

“Our parent company Proteon Pharmaceuticals is partnering other research institutions to put in place a highly qualified team of scientists and biotechnologists to work on improved testing mechanisms. India can also learn from this model and rope in private research institutions and labs in a major way to conduct efficient testing and research mechanisms to study about the virus. This is a good opportunity to learn from other countries’ experience and implement proven solutions on our local ground as well.

Private players can help by doing home collection of samples to avoid contact with people and learn from Coronavirus Detection Centres like that of Poland to take appropriate bio-safety and bio-security precautions as well as allow only laboratories with real time polymerase chain reaction assay for RNA virus to conduct Covid-19 tests as well as culture the virus,” **said Dr Ramdas Kambale, Senior Vice President, Vetphage Pharmaceuticals.**

“Quick and mass diagnostics is currently the most important tool for stopping the growth of coronavirus infections. If it is possible to detect a virus infection faster and on a larger scale, the infected people will be isolated sooner and receive appropriate treatment. This will translate into a decline in infection dynamics,” says **Prof. Jarosław Dastyh, CEO of Proteon Pharmaceuticals S.A.**

India which is currently in a lockdown of 21 days that has restricted public movement too can adopt the same measure in cooperation with Indian Council of Medical Research to create more and more Coronavirus Detection Centres so that more and more people are screened at a much faster pace. India’s testing rate per one million people was lowest at 3 as of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

In India, private lab testing has not become a wide scale operation yet and government institutes can only conduct 60,000 tests a week which is too low number for India’s large population. Leading health experts have already asked India to be a little more aggressive in testing as it is the only way to emerge less scathed from this epidemic.

According to WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus “Allowing people to stay at home and shutting down population is buying time and reducing the pressure on healthcare systems but this cannot contain the epidemic. To defeat it we need to attack the virus with aggressive testing and isolation of those affected so that they get proper treatment and do not spread it further”.