

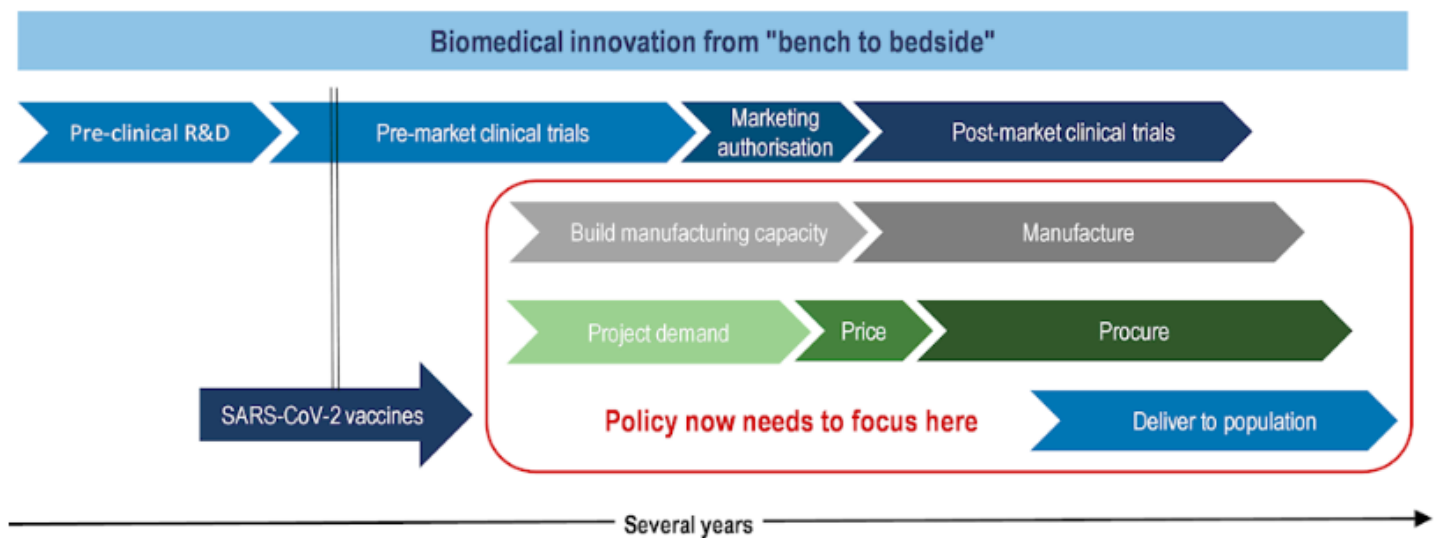
OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Treatments and a vaccine for COVID-19: The need for coordinating policies on R&D, manufacturing and access

29 May 2020

Key Findings:

Figure 1. It is a long way from R&D to population access



- Based on the most optimistic estimates, it will take at least 12 to 18 months for an effective vaccine for SARS-CoV-2 to become widely available. However, this assumes that one of the candidates currently in clinical trials turns out to be successful. Based on experience with the development of other vaccines, it could well take several years for a vaccine to be available.
- Attention has so far focussed almost exclusively on promoting research and early stage development of vaccines. But scientific breakthroughs – necessary though they are – are not enough. To end the pandemic, health systems have to vaccinate 50 to 75% of the global population. This requires building manufacturing and distribution capacity, making a new vaccine affordable, deciding who should get access first and planning massive vaccination campaigns. Policy has only recently been refocused on building capacity in some countries, but not in a co-ordinated way, which is a mistake.
- Pull mechanisms, such as an international Advance Market Commitment (AMC), are needed to complement the funds already allocated to provide incentives for completing R&D and making a vaccine available.
- International co-operation between governments is urgently needed to project demand and plan the necessary capacity to produce sufficient quantities of a future vaccine that will turn out to be effective. (Will the USA treat Canada with "reverence" in this regard? -WJP)
- Medicines to treat COVID-19 have so far provided disappointing results and no cure is yet in sight. Progress is mainly being made by repurposing existing medicines but most of them are associated with significant side effects and target narrow patient groups, such as the most severe cases.

- *Although there are differences to vaccines, many of the same challenges in building capacity and ensuring population access also apply to medicines for treating COVID-19. International pharmaceutical supply chains need to be reinforced to facilitate the arrival of these products.*
- *Governments also need to ensure that a future vaccine and effective treatments will be widely accessible. They need to agree upfront on rules for intellectual property rights (IPRs) and procurement to avoid bidding wars between countries and high prices, which could prevent the most vulnerable from having access. Public funding, whether allocated through push or pull mechanisms, should be tied to conditions for accessibility and affordability. Governments also need to agree on how to allocate scarce product volumes between them based on need. (The USA has legislated protection for their pharmaceuticals in producing vaccines such as preventative for COVID-19 -an incentive to "flood" the markets with their products **at the detriment to Canada?** -WJP*