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£33.2m will fund eight vaccine projects targeting deadly diseases, strengthening UK pandemic preparedness and helping protect people worldwide.

- Eight projects will target diseases including Ebola, Plague, Marburg and Lassa fever as overseas outbreaks continue to highlight global risks
- Funding will strengthen the UK's ability to develop, test and deploy vaccines at speed during future outbreaks
- Programme previously supported the development of the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine

Lives could be saved and the public better protected against future epidemic and pandemic threats through a £33.2 million government investment in vaccines against some of the world's deadliest infectious diseases.

Infectious diseases do not respect borders and outbreaks overseas can escalate quickly and pose risks to people in the UK and abroad.

This investment will help scientists develop, test and deploy vaccines faster when new health threats emerge both supporting people in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) and in turn protecting the UK by strengthening pandemic preparedness and improving resilience to future epidemic and pandemic threats.

The programme has already demonstrated the value of investing having supported development of the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. This latest investment will help researchers respond more quickly to future threats.

Supported by the UK Vaccine Network and delivered through Innovate UK, the funding will target diseases including Ebola, Plague, Marburg, Lassa fever, Nipah virus, chikungunya and Mayaro.

Eight projects will advance promising vaccines, clinical trials and technologies that can make vaccine design and manufacture faster and more effective.

The new awards will build the research, clinical trial and technical capability needed to develop, test and deploy vaccines at speed. They will also help make vaccines affordable, accessible and ready for use in countries at greatest risk.

Health Minister for Science, Innovation and Investment, Chris McDonald said:

The world remains at risk from new and re-emerging infectious diseases, and outbreaks overseas can quickly become threats to people here at home.

This £33.2 million investment will back leading scientists to develop and deploy vaccines faster and strengthen our pandemic preparedness while supporting our world-leading

life sciences sector.

By investing before a crisis hits, we can better protect the public, save lives and ensure the UK is ready to respond to future threats.

Ebola has an average case-fatality rate of around 50%, while Marburg outbreaks were reported in Rwanda in 2024 and Tanzania in 2025 and there is still no approved Marburg vaccine or antiviral treatment. Sustained research between outbreaks can shorten response times and reduce risks internationally and in the UK.

Recent reports of a suspected pneumonic plague case linked to a laboratory worker's death in Russia's Irkutsk region — with nearly 200 contacts placed under precautionary medical observation — are a reminder that the world remains at risk from serious infectious diseases.

Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Sir Chris Whitty said:

These projects aim to prevent some of the most dangerous infectious diseases in the world today.

The development of safe and effective vaccines for these diseases will strengthen our ability to protect people around the world.

The Department of Health and Social Care is delivering the awards through the UK Vaccine Network, which accelerates vaccine development against diseases with epidemic potential.

The government is working with Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), to deliver the funding. This includes Official Development Assistance (ODA), which supports the economic development and welfare of eligible developing countries and will fund five of the projects.

Claire Spooner, Director of Innovation as a Service at Innovate UK, said:

Innovation is essential to combat the future threat of emerging infectious diseases.

These projects, delivered by Innovate UK on behalf of the DHSC UK Vaccine Network programme, bring together cutting-edge science, technical expertise and international collaboration to advance vaccine development for priority pathogens.

Together, they will strengthen pandemic preparedness and contribute to global health security.

Richard Pebody, director of epidemic and emerging infections at UKHSA:

The ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a reminder that emerging infectious diseases are not a distant threat. UKHSA plays a critical role in responding to disease outbreaks, both at home and through our work with international partners. But preparedness, detection and response are only part of the picture.

Having effective vaccines and the manufacturing capability to produce them at speed is

essential. This investment will help ensure that the UK is ready to respond quickly and effectively to a range of emerging health threats. By working in partnership with affected countries we can help stop outbreaks, protect vulnerable populations and make the world, including the UK, safer from future epidemic and pandemic threats.

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