

For Immediate Release

US Health Department orders a further 2.2 million courses of Relenza

Melbourne Australia—Thursday 23 March 2006.

Biota Holdings Limited (ASX:BTA) today advise that the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has ordered a further 2.2 million courses of anti-viral drug zanamivir (Relenza®) from GlaxoSmithKline, based on the following announcement from the HHS Secretary, Mike Leavitt.

This order of 2.2 million courses is in addition to the 1.75 million courses announced on 2 March 2006.

The News Release dated 22 March 2006 is as follows:

"HHS Buys More Antiviral Medication for the Strategic National Stockpile

HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt today announced additional purchases of antiviral drugs that could be used in the event of a potential influenza pandemic. The department has ordered 2.2 million more treatment courses of antiviral drug zanamivir (Relenza®) from GlaxoSmithKline and 3.8 million more treatment courses of oseltamivir phosphate (Tamiflu®) from Roche. With these purchases, the Strategic National Stockpile will have a total of 26 million treatment courses of antiviral drugs for distribution to the states when an influenza pandemic is deemed to be imminent.

"Our ultimate goal is to stockpile sufficient quantities of antiviral drugs to treat 25 percent of the U.S. population," Secretary Leavitt said. "We also hope these purchases will stimulate development of expanded domestic production capacity in order to accommodate subsequent needs through normal commercial transactions."

President Bush has outlined a coordinated government strategy that includes the establishing the new International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, stockpiling antiviral medications, enhancing domestic capacity to develop and manufacture influenza vaccines and dose-sparing technology, expanding early-warning systems domestically and abroad and new funding and initiatives for local and state level preparedness.

As part of the Administration's goal to enhance state and local pandemic preparedness, HHS senior officials now have participated at summits in 26 states and the District of Columbia. To date, pandemic preparedness planning summits have been held in Alabama, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

More information on pandemic preparedness, including a list of 12 summits planned through March 31 is available on the newly revised www.pandemicflu.gov."

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