

**MedLife, in partnership with the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Matei Balș and Colentina Hospital, announce the first study on infected patients on the dynamics of naturally occurring antibodies for COVID 19 and the validation of certain diagnostic tests**

*The company also announces that it is developing its own research division with allocated investments worth over 500,000 euros for this year*

*Bucharest, May 11, 2020:* MedLife, the leader of the Romanian private healthcare market, announces the intention to start together with the National Institute of Infectious Diseases Matei Balș and Colentina Hospital the first study in Romania on the dynamics of naturally occurring antibodies to COVID 19 and validation of certain diagnostic tests.

The study will be performed on patients admitted to the 2 hospitals, who were confirmed positive by the RT PCR tests. From a methodological point of view, 2 serological methods will be used for antibody detection, Chemiluminescence and ELISA. The interpretation will be based on a combination of clinical and paraclinical data monitored during hospitalization. In addition, subjects will be interviewed in detail to assess the impact of the disease on health condition, attitudes and lifestyle.

"Unlike RT-PCR, which is the reference test used to diagnose active COVID-19 infection, serological tests can be useful in identifying individuals who have developed an immune response, as part of an active infection or as a result of a previous infection. Although complete information on immunity to this infection is not yet available, serological data could identify subjects who are no longer susceptible to the infection. Serological tests could also serve as seroprevalence studies useful for infection control measures from a public health perspective and understanding the importance of asymptomatic infections. At the same time, it could be useful for identifying potential plasma donors, which could be used in the treatment of severe forms. In addition, serological tests may assist in establishing the diagnosis of active infection in certain circumstances, but especially for the scenario in which a patient presents with clinical conditions that could be late complications of COVID-19, in which case RT-PCR would be negative. Although a large number of immunological tests are commercially available, their accuracy for diagnosis and optimal use remains to be studied. All serological tests should be validated before widespread use. Given this context, we want to lay the foundations of a local study, through which to evaluate at Romanian patients the dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies and to follow the validation of some available serological tests", said lecturer Dr. Adriana Hristea, principal investigator of Matei Balș Institute study, MD infectious diseases, Head of the Adults section no. 4.

Subjects enrolled in the study will be tested for antibodies also after hospital discharge for a minimum of 3 months to dynamically monitor the evolution of results. According to MedLife representatives, more than 5,000 tests will be allocated for this study.

"Through our study we try to evaluate the dynamics of antibodies on patients confirmed by RT PCR using available serological tests. We also want to evaluate this dynamic according to the clinical and biological evolution of the subjects. We want to calculate positive and negative predictive values on the local

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population, in real testing conditions in the clinical laboratory" said Dr. Roxana Vasilescu, medical coordinator of MedLife study, MD laboratory medicine, Head of MedLife central laboratory.

"It is clear that the scientific community's efforts to clarify the body's immune response to the new coronavirus infection are going to pay off in finding those serological tests that can tell with high accuracy if and when a person has been in contact with SARS-CoV-2, if even in the presence of antibodies the virus continues to spread and to what extent the developed antibodies are protective antibodies and for how long. This will happen over time. At this stage, we must understand how to make the best use of what we already have and we hope that this study will have a great contribution in this regard" said Dr. Roxana Vasilescu.

Having a solid foundation based on the first study on the natural immunization of the population, but also through the new partnership with public institutions, MedLife also announces that it is developing its own research center, continuing to offer its resources to the authorities to support their efforts in the fight with the new coronavirus. The company estimates investments worth more than half a million euros for research projects by the end of the year.

"Research is one of the engines of the development of large economies and can be one of the engines of the relaunch of the Romanian economy. As an industry leader, and especially as a company with Romanian capital, listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange, we want to lay the foundations of a local research center to support the efforts of the authorities in the fight against this pandemic. We need to develop local solutions and reduce dependence on imported studies and technologies in order to be able to respond even better to the following epidemiological alerts and more. We must join forces and restart Romania. We have already invested over 250,000 euros for the first immunization study and for the preparation of the second one, which we will carry out in partnership with Matei Balș Institute and Colentina Hospital and which we will fully support from our own resources. We plan other research projects and we estimate that we will invest in addition to the funds already allocated over 250.0000 euros by the end of the year" said Mihai Marcu, President and CEO of MedLife Group.

MedLife completed last week its own study on natural immunization of the population, being the largest study in the region and one of the largest in Europe that used for validation 4 test methods. The company also expressed its intention to expand the study in Suceava, the epicenter of the infection with the new coronavirus in Romania.