

Brazil launches first dengue vaccine campaign: drug maker

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Brazil on Saturday launched the first public immunisation programme in the Americas against dengue fever, with 500,000 people to be injected with the world's first authorized vaccine against the disease, French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi said.

The programme will be rolled out in the southern state of Parana, said the maker of the Dengvaxia [vaccine](#), which is the result of 20 years of research and 1.5 billion euros (\$1.7 billion) of investment.

"We will vaccinate all individuals 15-27 years of age in 28 municipalities and 9-44 years of age in the two municipalities with the top [dengue](#) burden in our state over the next three weeks," Parana Health Secretary Michele Caputo Neto said in a Sanofi statement.

He cited a study published in the *Brazilian Journal of Health Economics* indicating that implementation of the dengue immunisation strategy "could result in 74 percent reduction in disease burden in these highly-impacted municipalities within five years".

Sanofi said the campaign was the "first dengue immunisation public programme in the Americas".

The vaccine has been approved in Mexico, the Philippines, El Salvador and Costa Rica.

In Parana state, home to 10 million people, cases of [dengue fever](#) and

deaths due to the disease have tripled in recent years, according to Sanofi.

The mosquito-borne viral disease killed 863 people in Brazil in 2015, a 82.4 percent increase on the previous year.

The incidence of dengue has grown "dramatically" around the world in recent decades, according to the World Health Organization.

Asia currently bears 70 percent of the global burden of the disease. In April Sanofi launched a public immunisation programme against dengue in the Philippines.

Dengvaxia is produced in France in a facility which should be able to produce 100 million doses per year when at full capacity.

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