Novartis rises to second place in 2018 Access to Medicine Index

• Company leads the industry in access-to-medicine management thanks to long-term commitment, as well as ongoing innovation in access to healthcare

• Novartis moves up one position from number 3 in 2016

• Report highlights newly launched Novartis Access Principles to systematically integrate access strategies in research, development and delivery of new medicines

Basel, November 20, 2018 – Novartis ranked second in the 2018 Access to Medicine Index (ATMi), up from 3rd place in 2016, in recognition of its long-standing efforts to improve worldwide access to healthcare. Novartis remained the industry leader in access-to-medicine management, and its newly launched Access Principles – which aim to systematically integrate access strategies in how the company researches, develops and delivers medicines globally – have been highlighted as an innovative practice. The Novartis CEO and members of the Executive Committee now also have access objectives as part of their individual objectives.

The Index measures the performance of the top-20 pharmaceutical companies to improve access to medicines and healthcare in developing countries. It covers seven categories: access-to-medicine management; market influence and compliance; R&D; pricing, manufacturing and distribution; patents and licensing; capacity building; and product donations.

“We are delighted that the Access to Medicine Index has recognized our actions to expand access to medicines and healthcare to underserved patients,” said Vasant Narasimhan, CEO of Novartis. “It is a testimony to how our approach is evolving, from philanthropy to scalable and sustainable approaches, and to our commitment to systematically embed access into our business model. We have a long journey ahead of us, and we are committed to doing more to help get our therapies to more patients that need them.”

Novartis rose to 3rd place in the R&D category in recognition of its systematic approach to assessing its portfolio against the unmet needs of underserved populations through a dedicated unit. The company rose 13 spots to 2nd place in market influence and compliance. The ATMi recognized our improved performance in internal controls and transparency, including financial support to patient groups. Novartis also performed strongly on product donations, in particular thanks to the wide geographic coverage of its leprosy program in 49 countries.

Among the recognized best practices are the dedicated R&D unit to adapt medicines to the needs of patients in low- and middle-income countries; Novartis Access, our portfolio of medicines against chronic diseases for USD 1 per treatment per month, which was expanded to new countries in Africa and Asia; SMS for Life, which uses mobile technology to manage medicine stocks, train healthcare workers and track disease surveillance data; and ComHIP,
supported by the Novartis Foundation and its partners to improve hypertension control and self-management in Ghana. Further, the company’s initiatives to strengthen care at community level and its approach to valuing the financial, environmental and social impact of its business activities on society are also highlighted.

Expanding access is complex, and despite our best efforts, there are still opportunities to do more to help ensure our innovation reaches more people. As opportunities for improvement for Novartis, the ATMi identified further embedding our access principles, expanding equitable pricing strategies to cover more countries and leveraging voluntary licensing opportunities.

In addition to the ATMi, Novartis participates in several key sustainability questionnaires and ratings such as the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, Sustainalytics, CDP, Vigeo and Oekom, and systematically engages with analysts on its sustainability performance. In 2018, Novartis was again included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (#4) and the DJSI Europe Index. Novartis was also included in several reputation and innovation rankings, including the Thomson Reuters Diversity & Inclusion Index (#2), the Nature Index (#3), the Pharmaceutical Innovation Index (#3) and PatientView’s reputation survey (#4). And we were recognized as one of the most sustainable corporations (#64) by Corporate Knights, one of the World's Most Innovative Companies (#1 in biotech and #21 overall) by Fast Company and one of the most admired pharmaceutical companies (#3) by Fortune.

Novartis pursues a combination of approaches to expand access to its medicines – philanthropy, zero-profit initiatives, equitable pricing strategies and social business models. In 2017, the company reached 46 million patients globally through its access-to-healthcare initiatives, and 15 million people through health education programs.

For more about our efforts to expand access to healthcare, please visit: 

About Novartis
Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people’s lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world’s top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach nearly 1 billion people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 125 000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at www.novartis.com.

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