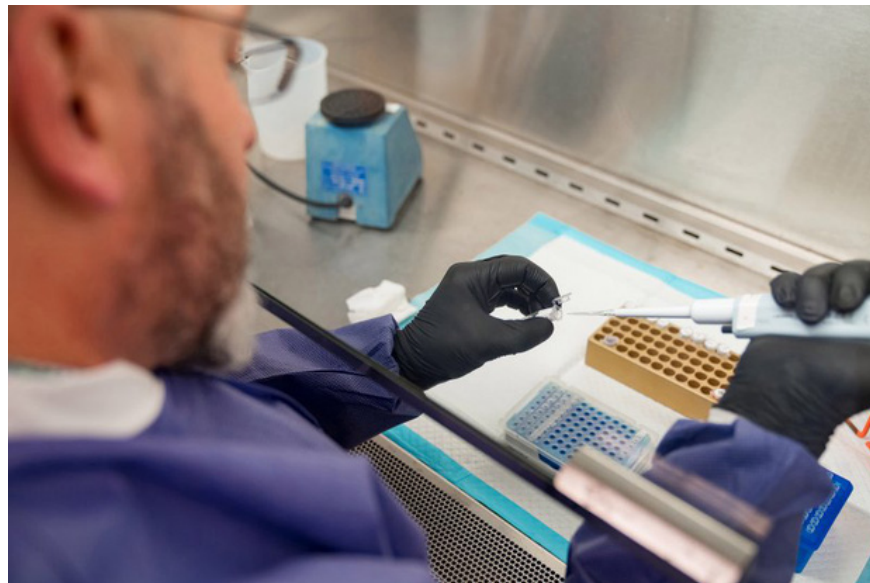


The US issued an emergency permit for the COVID-19 test system 10 times faster

US health lawmakers approved the SARS-CoV-2 virus testing system, capable of testing 10 times faster, contributing to addressing the gap in the effort to prevent the spread of the disease.

According to the Bloomberg website, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted emergency use for testing on the cobas 6800/8800 system of Roche Holding AG. This 8800 system is capable of testing up to 4,128 patients per day, while the 6800 version can test for 1,440 people per day.

The tool is also available in Europe and countries that accept the CE certification standard (mandatory certificates for regulated goods, which are considered as commercial passports into the European Union market). Roche's cobas testing system has installed 695 devices of 6800 and 132 versions of 8800 worldwide.



Examination of Corona virus sample at New York Department of Health laboratory. Photo: New York Times

'We increased the speed of testing by 10 times,' said Thomas Schinecker - Director of a Swiss-based pharmaceutical company - in an interview.

The cobas 8800 system can test patients about 10 times faster than Roche's MagNA Pure 24 and LightCycler 480 devices. The cobas 6800/8800 instruments give results within four hours. The testing mechanism involves analyzing the nucleic acid present in the patient's saliva or mucus, and comparing them with the chains found in

other Corona virus strains.

This test tool plays an important role in preventing COVID-19 disease from spreading because it allows health workers to identify infected people and isolate them, even if they do not exhibit many symptoms. That could potentially reduce the total number of infections and give drug manufacturers more time to come up with better treatments and vaccines. This is the third test tool and the first commercially produced tool that the FDA passes.

The US and most European countries are being criticized for the speed of testing for SARS-CoV-2 virus and not having enough virus testing kits to serve the people, making the new deadly disease spread quickly. Since January when the COVID-19 epidemic broke out, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and US public health laboratories have performed only 13,600 tests.

Recently, US President Donald Trump has made a commitment to reform the approach to testing for SARS-CoV-2 virus in the United States with fast and convenient service options. The US leader said on Tuesday that the country will have about 500,000 more tests for the SARS-CoV-2 virus next week.



US President Donald Trump at a press conference in the White House, Washington DC on March 13. Photo: THX / TTXVN

President Trump declared the national emergency the same day. In addition, with the declaration of a national emergency, the US Secretary of Health may waive certain requirements for health care facilities.

As of March 12, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed that the US had 1,264 cases of SARS-CoV-2 virus infection, an increase of 277 cases compared to the previous announcement, while the number of 36 deaths. The disease has spread in 42 states and the US capital Washington.

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