AstraZeneca claims to have saved six million lives with Covid vaccine

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harmaceutical giant AstraZeneca claimed that its Vaxzevria Covid vaccine has saved six million lives across the world as it reported rocketing revenues on the release of its interim results up by almost half.

Total revenue across the group in the first half of the year was boosted by 48% to $22.2 billion (£18.2 billion).

CEO Pascal Soriot said: “Vaxzevria is estimated to have saved more than six million lives during the first year of roll-out.”

He said that the company’s Covid protection vaccine Evusheld had now “protected hundreds of thousands of immunocompromised people”, enabling them to return to a more normal life and that it continued to protect against new variants.

The business said it would upgrade its prediction for its year and revenue and now expected a ”low twenties” percent rise and that it had made significant advances in cancer and heart failure medication.

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Soirot added:“Given the ongoing performance of our underlying business and the contribution of our Covid medicines, we are updating our revenue guidance for 2022. This has enabled us to increase our research and development (R&D) investment in the exciting number of pipeline opportunities that can benefit patients and drive long term sustainable growth for our company.

“We look forward to announcing the results of several important late-stage trials this year and next”.

Ellie Davenport, healthcare analyst at Citeline, said that “sales of Covid medicines are likely to level off given the impending global shift from a pandemic to endemic phase” but that AstraZeneca’s investment of $2.5 billion in R&D would “see its portfolio go from strength-to-strength, with several assets years away from reaching their peak sales potential.”

However, AstraZeneca said that its revenues from the Covid vaccine were anticipated to be “broadly flat” this year compared to last, but that lack of growth would be offset by advances Evusheld.

The pharma company also announced that Michel Demaré is set to succeed Leif Johansson as chairman. Johansson will step aside after the AstraZeneca AGM next year.