



Managing community concerns about ARV supply

The importance of consistent HIV health sector messaging

The current COVID-19 crisis has raised concerns about HIV treatment supply in Australia. Despite continued assurances that supply is not, nor is likely to be compromised, rumours to the contrary persist.

This speculation has the potential to raise anxiety levels and cause consumer panic. Maintaining message consistency across the HIV health workforce is vitally important at this time.

When patients or customers register concern about the supply of HIV medications, please reassure them with the following messages:

1. The pharmaceutical companies that supply antiretrovirals (ARVs) in Australia have given assurances that there is no shortage. There are enough HIV treatments in the country right now to meet the needs of people with HIV for many months.
2. Stock-outs or delays in re-stocking ARVs at a local pharmacy does not mean that national supply is limited.
3. In the unlikely event of an impending shortage of a particular ARV, the TGA would add it to this publicly available list: <https://apps.tga.gov.au/prod/> and then take action to ensure ongoing access for PLHIV taking that medication. NB: There are no ARVs currently on this list.
4. It is important to keep taking HIV treatments as prescribed. People with HIV should not skip doses or share medication with friends who are worried about their own supply.
5. Prescriptions for ARVs are currently limited to two months' supply at a time and this is standard for everyone. To minimise trips to the pharmacy, arrangements are in place so PLHIV can have their medications posted to them. For more information about this issue please talk with your pharmacist.

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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine

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ASHM is a peak organisation of health professionals in Australia and New Zealand who work in HIV, viral hepatitis, other BBVs and sexually transmissible infections. ASHM draws on its experience and expertise to support the health workforce and to contribute to the sector, domestically and internationally.

National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWHA)

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NAPWHA is Australia's peak non-government organisation representing community-based groups of people with HIV. Its membership of national networks and state-based organisations reflects the diverse make-up of the HIV-positive community and enables NAPWHA to confidently represent the positive voice in Australia.

Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)

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AFAO is the national federation for the HIV community response in Australia. AFAO works to end HIV transmission and reduce its impact on communities in Australia, Asia and the Pacific. AFAO's members include the AIDS Councils in each state and territory.