

SUMMARY SLIDES



UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS ON **SERVICE DELIVERY FOR THE TREATMENT AND CARE OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV**

MARCH 2021



Introduction

Since the 2016 WHO consolidated guidelines on the use of antiretroviral drugs for treating and preventing HIV infection was published and with the rapid scale-up of ART, emerging evidence and implementation experience and approaches justify reviewing and updating the WHO service delivery guidance. Following several scoping meetings and consultations, WHO convened a guideline development group to address several key questions to help national programmes in optimizing their delivery of care to all people living with HIV.

Many individuals contributed to the development of the guideline including people living with HIV and representatives from affected communities, ministry of health, researchers, implementers, and health care providers.



Recommendations

Recommendation	Update or new
ART initiation may be offered outside the health facility (Conditional recommendation; low- to moderate-certainty evidence)	New
People established on ART should be offered clinical visits every 3–6 months, preferably every six months if feasible (Strong recommendation; moderate-certainty evidence)	Update ^a
People established on ART should be offered refills of ART lasting 3–6 months, preferably six months if feasible (Strong recommendation; moderate- to low-certainty evidence)	Update ^b
HIV programmes should implement interventions to trace people who have disengaged from care and provide support for re-engagement (Strong recommendation; low-certainty evidence)	New
Sexual and reproductive health services, including contraception, may be integrated within HIV services (Conditional recommendation; very-low-certainty evidence)	Update ^c
Diabetes and hypertension care may be integrated with HIV services (Conditional recommendation; very-low-certainty evidence)	New
Psychosocial interventions should be provided to all adolescents and young adults living with HIV (Strong recommendation; moderate-certainty evidence)	New
Task sharing of specimen collection and point-of-care testing with non-laboratory personnel should be implemented when professional staffing capacity is limited (Strong recommendation; moderate-certainty evidence)	Update ^d

^a Updated from a strong recommendation made in 2016 that was based on moderate-certainty evidence. The evidence supporting this recommendation has been re-assessed but the recommendation itself has not changed.

^b Updated from a strong recommendation made in 2016 that was based on low-certainty evidence.

^c Updated from a conditional recommendation made in 2016 that was based on very low-certainty evidence. The evidence supporting this recommendation has been re-assessed but the recommendation itself has not changed.

^d Updated from a good practice statement made in 2016.

Good practice statements

Good practice statement	Update or new
Health systems should invest in people-centred practices and communication, including ongoing training, mentoring, supportive supervision and monitoring health workers, to improve the relationships between patients and health-care providers.	New
The offer of same-day ART initiation should include approaches to improve uptake, treatment adherence and retention, such as tailored patient education, counselling and support.	New
Viral load for treatment monitoring should be complemented with non-judgemental, tailored approaches to assessing adherence.	New
Disease programmes, especially those related to HIV and TB, should actively work towards balanced integration of diagnostic services.	New

Criteria for determining whether a person is established on ART

To support the implementation of these recommendations, WHO has developed criteria for determining whether a person has been successfully established on ART:

- receiving ART for at least six months;
- no current illness, which does not include well-controlled chronic health conditions;
- good understanding of lifelong adherence: adequate adherence counselling provided; and
- evidence of treatment success: at least one suppressed viral load result within the past six months (if viral load is not available: CD4 count >200 cells/mm³ or weight gain, absence of symptoms and concurrent infections).



Guiding principles

The following principles have informed the development of these guidelines and should guide the implementation of the recommendations:

- The implementation of the guidelines should contribute to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by achieving key global and national HIV goals.
- The guidelines are based on a public health approach to scaling up the use of antiretroviral drugs along the continuum of HIV prevention, care and treatment.
- Implementation of the guidelines needs to be accompanied by efforts to promote and protect the human rights of people who need HIV services, including ensuring informed

consent, preventing stigma and discrimination in the provision of services and promoting gender equity and respectful care.

- Implementation of the recommendations in these guidelines should be informed by the local context, including HIV epidemiology and the prevalence of other comorbidities, the values and preferences of providers and beneficiaries, feasibility and acceptability, availability of resources, the organization and capacity of the health system and anticipated cost– effectiveness.



Applicability of service delivery recommendations

- In contrast to most clinical interventions, service delivery interventions are generally highly context specific in terms of both relative effectiveness and relative importance in a given context.
- Although service delivery is primarily aimed at developing programmatic guidance to help implement all the WHO recommendations, using primarily process-related outcomes and outputs, the basic principles for developing these WHO recommendations align with the concept of people-centred care, the public health approach and a rights-based approach.
- Recognizing the importance of streamlined, standardized approaches to scaling up HIV services in settings with limited resources, the public health approach emphasizes strategies such as task sharing, decentralization, integrating HIV services with other public health programmes and patient and community empowerment.
- The forthcoming WHO consolidated guidelines for HIV services for key populations describes essential strategies for an enabling environment, which includes developing supportive legislation and policy, including working towards decriminalizing behaviour, financial commitment, addressing stigma and discrimination, empowering communities and addressing violence against key populations.
- WHO also supports a strong emphasis on workforce training against stigma, discrimination and strategies to support people who are subject to violence and to ensure that all populations benefit from accessing better and safer health-care services.



Thank you

WHO would like to acknowledge and thank the numerous contributors to these guidelines that were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to engage with the global HIV community and Member States to ensure the continuity and quality of care for people living with HIV during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

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WHO gratefully acknowledges the contributions of many individuals and organizations in developing these guidelines.

GRADE methodologist

Roger Chou (Oregon Health & Science University, USA).

Service Delivery Guideline Development Group (2020)

Co-chairs: **Aleny Couto** (Ministry of Health, Mozambique) and **Andreas Jahn** (Ministry of Health, Malawi).

Cindy Amaiza (Y+ Kenya, Kenya), **Florence Riako Anam** (Médecins Sans Frontières, Kenya), **Tsitsi Apollo** (Ministry of Health and Child Care, Zimbabwe), **Baker Bakashaba** (The AIDS Support Organisation, Uganda), **Erika Castellanos** (Global Action for Trans* Equality, The Netherlands), **Manish Bamrotiya** (John Hopkins University Field Staff, India), **Tom Ellman** (Médecins Sans Frontières, South Africa), **Elvin Geng** (Washington University in St. Louis, USA), **Naresh Goel** (National AIDS Control Organisation, India), **Charles Holmes** (Georgetown University Center for Innovation in Global Health, USA), **Daniella Mark** (Paediatric-Adolescent Treatment Africa, South Africa), **Thi Nhan** (Ministry of Health, Viet Nam), **Catherine Orrell** (University of Cape Town, South Africa), **Miriam Rabkin** (ICAP at Columbia University, USA), **Serhii Riabokon** (Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine), **Izukanji Sikazwe** (Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia, Zambia), **Nikita Smirnov** (Moscow State City Center for AIDS Prevention and Control, Russian Federation) and **Nicola Willis** (Africaid Zvandiri, Zimbabwe).

External Review Group

Alice Armstrong (UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa, Kenya), **Myo Nyein Aung** (Juntendo University, Tokyo, Japan), **Helen Bygrave** (Médecins Sans Frontières, United Kingdom), **Susan Cleary** (University of Cape Town, South Africa), **Anna Grimsrud** (International AIDS Society, South Africa), **Tamar Kabakian-Khosholian** (American University of Beirut, Lebanon), **Sergio Maulen** (Ministry of Health, Argentina), **Raymond Mutisya** (Jhpiego, Kenya), **Eyerusalem Negussie** (Ministry of Health, Ethiopia), **Nittaya Phanuphak** (Institute of HIV Research and Innovation, Thailand), **Sydney Rosen** (University of Boston, USA), **Nadia A. Sam-Agudu**

(Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, USA and Institute of Human Virology Nigeria) and **Sedona Sweeney** (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom).

Evidence reviewers

Sarah Bernays (University of Sydney, Australia), **Amrita Daftary** (York University, Canada), **Ingrid Eshun-Wilson** (Washington University in St. Louis, USA), **Elvin Geng** (Washington University in St. Louis, USA), **Luann Hatane** (Paediatric-Adolescent Treatment Africa, South Africa), **Paul Hine** (Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom), **Shaukat Khan** (Clinton Health Access Initiative, USA), **Christina Laurenzi** (Stellenbosch University, South Africa), **Anke Rohwer** (Stellenbosch University, South Africa), **Angela Salomon** (McGill University, Canada), **Sarah Skeen** (Stellenbosch University, South Africa) and **Nicola Willis** (Africaid Zvandiri, Zimbabwe).

WHO staff and consultants

Nathan Ford and **Marco Vitoria** (Department of Global HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infection Programmes) coordinated the overall development process with **Cadi Irvine** and **Ajay Rangaraj** (consultants, Department of Global HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infection Programmes) under the leadership of **Meg Doherty** (Director, Department of Global HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infection Programmes).

The following individuals in the Department of Global HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infection Programmes contributed to developing these guidelines:

Wole Ameyan, **Rachel Baggeley**, **Silvia Bertagnolio**, **Shona Dalal**, **Philippa Easterbrook**, **Cheryl Johnson**, **David Lowrance**, **Virginia McDonald**, **Morkor Newman**, **Boniface Nguimfack**, **Martina Penazzato**, **Françoise Renaud**, **Michelle Rodolph**, **Andrew Seale**, **Satvinder Singh**, **Annette Verster** and **Lara Vojnov**.

Others who provided contributions include **Annabel Baddeley**, **Dennis Falzon** and **Ismail Nazir** (Global Tuberculosis Programme), **Giorgio Cometto** (Health and Wellness Programme Department), **Batool Fatima** (Mental Health Department) and **Andreas Reis** (Health Ethics and Governance Unit).

The following consultants also contributed to developing the guidelines: **David Breuer** technically edited the document and **400 Communications Ltd** did the design and layout.

WHO regional and country offices

Ahmed Sabry Alaama (WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean), **Marcelo Freitas** (WHO Regional Office for the Americas), **Naoko Ishikawa** (WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific), **Frank Lule** (WHO Regional Office for Africa), **Bridget Mugisa** (WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean), **Giovanni Ravasi** (WHO Regional Office for the Americas), **Bharat Rewari** (WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia) and **Elena Vovc** (WHO Regional Office for Europe).

Observers

Carmen Perez (Unitaid), **Peter Ehrenkranz** (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA), **Katy Godfrey** (Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator), **Anna Grimsrud** (International AIDS Society, Switzerland), **Julianna Hills** (United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), **Siobhan Malone** (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA), **Tom Minor** (United States Agency for International Development), **Obinna Onyekwena** (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria), **Ani Shakarishvili** (UNAIDS), **Alison Wringe** (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) and **Isaac Zulu** (United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

Funding

The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States Agency for International Development, Unitaid and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding for these guidelines.