

WHO welcomes Abbott's decision to reduce the price of second-line antiretroviral therapy

Medicine

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The World Health Organization (WHO) is committed to work towards universal access, by 2010, to HIV prevention services and to treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Encouragingly, the number of people being treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART) continues to grow in low and middle income countries. This trend is also resulting in a growing number of people who require access to "second-line" ART, as they develop resistance to "first-line" treatments.

In this context, WHO welcomes the decision of Abbott Laboratories to significantly reduce the price of lopinavir/ritonavir (LPV/r, marketed as Kaletra/Aluvia®). LPV/r is considered particularly effective as second-line ART, and the demand for it has been growing.

In the interests of public health, WHO will continue to work with countries, people living with HIV/AIDS, organizations and the pharmaceutical industry, to find mechanisms that address the immediate need to rapidly increase access and affordability of life saving drugs, while maintaining the long term need to foster research and development in innovative medicines.

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