



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
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Health Department responds to reports on HIV medicine suppliers

Pretoria: The Department of Health has noted media reports regarding two suppliers awarded contracts under the current antiretroviral (ARV) tender who have since entered business rescue.

The phenomenon of a company that has received a tender from the state or any other entity, public or private, going into some supply-related problems, be it business rescue, financial hardships or outright production failures is not new and is well known. Hence in the past a buffer stock was always kept in a house waiting for eventualities caused by the above phenomenon. Nowadays better methods are used to achieve similar aims.

It is for this reason that the ARV tender was deliberately awarded to multiple suppliers as a risk-mitigation strategy to ensure continuity of supply in the event of supply constraints by any individual contracted supplier. This approach enables the Department to respond swiftly by engaging alternative contracted suppliers where necessary.

Following notification of supply challenges experienced by the affected companies, the Department immediately engaged with them to establish the causes and expected timelines for resolution. In parallel, the Department has activated contingency arrangements by engaging other awarded suppliers to increase production and supply volumes to cover any shortfalls.

Based on current consumption data and stock monitoring, provinces have sufficient stock of the affected antiretroviral medicines to cover approximately three months of expected demand. Stock levels continue to be closely monitored at national and provincial levels to ensure uninterrupted availability. Ongoing engagement with all contracted suppliers is underway to ensure stability of supply across the health system.

The Department is alive to the consequences of the country running out of ARVs and will never allow this to happen. Therefore the Department wishes to assure the public, healthcare workers and patients that we are not about to run out of ARVs and for that reason patients must continue to visit their stations where they collect their normal supplies to receive whatever they need.

The Department reiterates that uninterrupted access to life-saving HIV treatment remains a national priority, and all measures are in place to ensure that patients continue to receive their medicines without disruption.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale Departmental Spokesperson 0724323792/ Foster.mohale@health.gov.za	Mr Sello Lediga Health Ministry Spokesperson 0823539859/ Sello.Lediga@health.gov.za
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