Donate Now

In the opinion piece "Medicine Shortages Are an Unseen Consequence of COVID-19," the nonprofit group AID FOR AIDS makes an urgent plea for donations to its HIV Medicine Recycling Program. Below is an edited excerpt.

November 16, 2020 By AID FOR AIDS

HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, was discovered in 1983. Today, more than 38 million people worldwide are living with the virus, and more than 40% of them lack access to treatment.

Since 1996, AID FOR AIDS (AFA) has pioneered an essential program that collects surplus HIV medication in the United States to recycle and redistribute it to people who would not have access to it. AFA perfoms this service as humanitarian aid in non-U.S. territories.

The HIV Medicine Recycling Program was AFA's first program. For 24 years, it has been providing lifesaving drugs to more than 20,000 people in 59 countries. Today, it is the largest HIV medicine redistribution program in the United States, having collected and redistributed nearly $160 million worth of medicines.

COVID-19 has changed the world, and AFA is no exception. The HIV Medicine Recycling Program has been deeply affected, as the locations that provided drug delivery boxes and shipping services were temporarily closed to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

Donations have been reduced by 60% to 80% due to COVID-19, compromising the continuity of treatment for more than 1,000 people who currently rely on AFA as their primary access to HIV treatment.

AFA gathers, sorts, discards and stores unused, unexpired medicines including:

- Antiretrovirals: protease inhibitors, nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, entry inhibitors and integrase inhibitors;
- Other medicines that may benefit people with HIV, including antifungals/antimycotics, antibiotics and treatments for respiratory conditions, diabetes, elevated cholesterol, hepatitis C and other comorbidities.

If you're interested in donating your surplus medications:

1. Send your unexpired medications to our headquarters at: 131 Varick Street, Suite 1006, New York, New York 10013. If you are unable to cover the shipping expenses, please email us at lklie@aidforaids.org so we can provide you with a prepaid shipping label.
2. AFA accepts all unexpired antiretroviral medications as well as
   all medicines that may be useful to manage comorbid conditions in people living with HIV. AFA accepts bottles that have been opened as long as the medicine is unexpired. AFA accepts sealed containers of liquid and powder medications and both sealed and unsealed containers of pills.
3. Please remove the names and addresses of all individuals from prescription bottles in order for us to comply with privacy and confidentiality laws. Always leave the medicine's name and expiration date visible.
4. Please place all pill bottles in a sealable plastic bag, and place this bag inside a padded envelope or cardboard box. All pill bottles should be securely closed. Please do not send any loose capsules or tablets inside a plastic
   bag or box!
5. Please fill out the donor card available at aidforaids.org, print it and place the card inside the envelope or box. If you would like to keep your donation anonymous, please include the other information requested, which enables us to track donations and monitor trends.

Your recycled meds can become a lifeline for someone else. From making donations to sharing information, any form of help can save many lives!

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/donate-now-aid-for-aids