Getting HIV Aid to Ukraine

Global groups unite to deliver meds.

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Before war broke out in Ukraine, of the estimated 260,000 people living with HIV in the country, about 152,000 were taking medication to suppress the virus. Not long after Russia invaded on February 21, nearly half the pharmacies were shuttered. That's a long time to go without refilling a prescription.

As the HIV crisis continues to escalate amid the large-scale humanitarian catastrophe, global AIDS groups and drugmakers have pitched in to supply meds. In March and April, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) "invested a total of $13 million in emergency funding to procure 51 million doses of antiretroviral medications (ARVs), enough to meet the urgent treatment needs of Ukrainians living with HIV for up to a year," reported the Department of State.

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) also led efforts to provide HIV meds—and harm reduction services, such as opioid substitution therapy—to Ukrainians (for example, through the HIV network 100% Liife) and to refugees in Poland, the Czech Republic and other European Union countries. Joining UNAIDS and PEPFAR are the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the United States Agency for International Development and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Anyone in Ukraine who is seeking ARVs can call 0800-500-451 or visit http://helpme.com.ua/ua/main.

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