

Gilead to End Free Access to Four HIV Meds Via Patient Assistance Programs

Plus: World Health Organization to develop guidelines for long-acting injectable lenacapavir as PrEP to prevent HIV.

January 8, 2025 By [Trent Straube](#)

HIV drugmaker [Gilead Sciences](#) announced that effective January 31, the HIV meds [Truvada](#), [Emtriva](#), [Tybost](#) and [Complera](#) will no longer be available for free through its patient and medication assistance programs. However, individuals can still access Gilead's other blockbuster HIV drugs, such as [Biktarvy](#) and [Descovy](#), through those assistance programs.

The change was announced in an [October 8, 2024, letter](#) and first [reported by STAT News](#).

"Considering the broad availability of multiple generic medication options, and/or low enrollment volume, effective January 31, 2025, the Advancing Access program will no longer provide free medication for Truvada, Emtriva, Tybost and Complera," stated the letter. The Advancing Access program refers to Gilead's Patient Assistance Program/Medication Assistance Program (PAP/MAP).

What's more, Gilead is no longer accepting new enrollees in PAP/MAP for these four medications. In addition to being used as [HIV treatment](#), Truvada is also prescribed to HIV-negative people as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV.

The letter noted that Gilead has "an exception program for eligible uninsured individuals assigned female at birth who have been prescribed Truvada for HIV prevention who cannot afford a generic alternative. If eligible, these individuals may continue to receive Truvada at no cost through July 31, 2025."

Gilead's letter further notes that it will continue to offer other patient support services, including access to the HIV meds Biktarvy, Descovy, Genvoya, Odefsey, Stribild and Sunlenca.

Gilead's update may affect people who access their HIV meds through various local and state programs, which in turn receive the drugs from Gilead. Coverage of Gilead meds and generics may vary depending on the insurance plan, so individuals should check with their providers.

Various programs help uninsured and underinsured people access meds to prevent or treat HIV. To learn more, visit the POZ Basics "[HIV Drug Assistance Programs](#)."

In other PrEP news, the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) is convening a group of experts](#) to develop guidelines for the use of lenacapavir, an injectable given every six months. [Recent studies](#) have shown the med to be highly effective in women, gay men and gender-diverse people. Considered the “[breakthrough of the year](#)” by Science magazine, the twice-yearly HIV PrEP could significantly reduce global HIV cases and could be available later this year.

The WHO announced it aims to create a framework for implementing lenacapavir as PrEP, to simplify HIV testing protocols and evaluate the efficacy, safety and acceptability of injectable lenacapavir for those at risk for HIV. Public feedback is accepted at hiv-aids@who.int until January 2025.

To date, the Food and Drug Administration has approved three forms of PrEP: Truvada and Descovy are daily pills, and Apretude is a shot given every two months. Generic (and much cheaper) versions of Truvada are available.