Merck to Discount Isentress and Crixivan for ADAPs

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Merck will continue a price freeze on two of its HIV drugs—Isentress (raltegravir) and Crixivan (indinavir)—and the company will offer steeper discounts to state AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs), according to an agreement reached with The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD). The new price agreement is intended to address a crisis in ADAP funding that has already resulted in waiting lists in a number of states for people with HIV.

“ADAPs provide crucial support for uninsured and underserved people living with HIV,” said Patrick Bergstedt, senior vice president and general manager of Merck’s infectious diseases franchise. “At Merck we believe that it is important that ADAPs are able to continue to provide support for as many people that need it, especially given the unprecedented fiscal challenges confronting many states at this time.”

The integrase inhibitor Isentress is a new HIV drug that was recently added to the list of preferred first-line antiretroviral (ARV) regimens in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ treatment guidelines. Crixivan, one of the first protease inhibitors approved to treat HIV, is less frequently prescribed.

“On behalf of the nearly 200,000 clients that ADAPs serve, we applaud Merck for its continued commitment to HIV,” said Dwayne Haught, manager of the HIV Medication Program for the Texas Department of State Health Services and a spokesperson for the ADAP Crisis Task Force. “Merck’s history of HIV research, along with its responsible pricing and related efforts to help alleviate the current funding crisis facing ADAPs, is consistent with Merck’s track record of working to help ensure access to treatments such as Crixivan and Isentress for the people most in need.”

The ADAP Crisis Task Force has been meeting recently with all of the pharmaceutical companies selling ARVs in hopes of securing similar pricing agreements.

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